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DISAPPEARED IN 2016

Debris of IAF's An-32 found in Bay of Bengal

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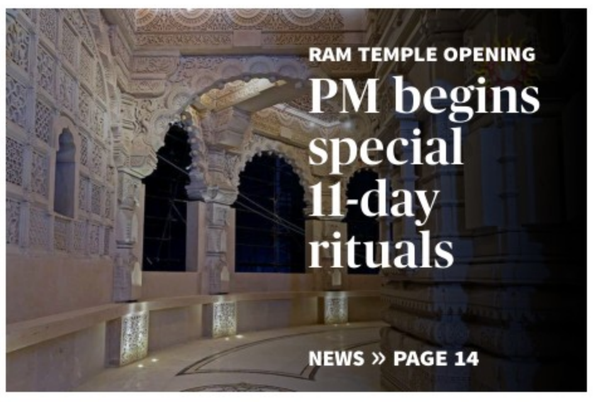

RAM TEMPLE OPENING

PM begins special 11-day rituals

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RED SEA ATTACKS RETALIATION

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The story of Sri Lankan refugees in Tamil Nadu

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INDIA'S TASK CUT OUT

Hockey Olympic Qualifiers from today

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NEARBY

KIA handled 3.72 crore passengers during 2023

BENGALURU
Bangalore International Airport Ltd., operator of KIA in Bengaluru, reported a notable growth in passenger numbers in calendar year 2023.
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'Ascertain age of accused in criminal cases'

BENGALURU
The High Court of Karnataka has directed the judges of all trial courts, including special courts, to ensure that the accused produced in criminal cases are not minors
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PROPERTYPLUS » PAGE 9

Retail inflation rose to a 4-month high of 5.7% in Dec.

Vikas Dhoot
NEW DELHI

India's retail inflation accelerated to a four-month high of 5.7% in December 2023, from 5.55% a month earlier, led by an uptick in food prices that rose 9.5% nationally and breached the 10% mark for urban consumers, hitting 10.42%.

Although rural India's consumers faced a slightly lower rise in food prices at just under 9%, they faced higher overall inflation at nearly 6%, compared to 5.5% faced by their urban peers in December.

While price rise hardened in December, the average consumer price inflation for the October-to-December quarter has been 5.4%, moderately lower than the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) projection of 5.6%.

Yet, hopes of an interest cut on the horizon remain bleak, as the RBI expects an average price rise of 5.2% for the first half of 2024 before easing to its 4% target between July and September.

Within the food basket, inflation picked up in pulses (20.73%), vegetables (27.6%), fruits (11.14%), and sugar (7.14%) in December.

It was just fractionally lower for cereals and spices, which continued to record steep inflation of 9.9% and 19.7%, respectively.

Interestingly, while consumer food prices rose faster in urban areas at 10.4%, rural consumers witnessed greater inflation in some products such as cereals (10.3%), milk, spices, and sugar.

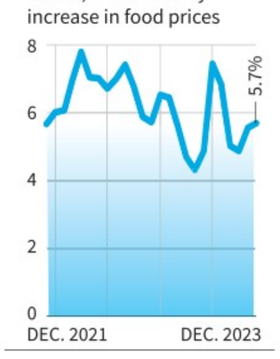
Inflation continued to ease in the case of milk (5.1%), meat and fish (1.15%), and eggs (4.4%). Meanwhile, the deflation in edible oil prices, which had surged in 2022 after the Russia-Ukraine conflict, remained virtually unchanged from November levels at 15%.

Fuel, light prices fall

On a month-on-month basis, however, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) declined 0.32% from November 2023 levels, with the Consumer Food Price Index easing by 0.9%.

Slight uptick

India's retail inflation increased to a four-month high of 5.7% in December 2023, from 5.55% a month earlier, influenced by increase in food prices



SC refuses to stay law on CEC, EC selection; issues notice to govt.

Petitioner said the Act diluted earlier judgment of top court in the matter by replacing CJI with a Union Cabinet Minister in selection committee

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday declined to stay a new law which brushed aside a top court judgment to include the Chief Justice of India as a member of the high-powered selection committee to appoint the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and Election Commissioners (ECs).

"How can we stay a statute?" Justice Sanjiv Khanna, leading a Bench comprising Justice Dipankar Datta, asked petitioner Jaya Thakur's lawyers.

The Bench, however, issued notice to the Union of India and listed the case for hearing in April.

"The CEC and Other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Act, 2023 has diluted the Supreme Court judgment by replacing the Chief Justice of India with a Union Cabinet Minister," Ms. Thakur, a Congress party leader, argued.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 14

Points of contention

A look at what the Sections 7 and 8 of the CEC and Other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Act, 2023 say

- Section 7 mandates the selection committee to consist of the Prime Minister, a Union Cabinet Minister, and the Leader of the Opposition or the leader of the largest Opposition party in the Lok Sabha
- Section 8 allows the selection committee to regulate its own procedure in a transparent manner and consider persons other than those suggested by the search committee

Yuva Nidhi scheme launched

The Hindu Bureau
SHIVAMOGGA

The Karnataka government on Friday launched the Congress' fifth "guarantee" scheme offering monthly stipend of ₹3,000 to graduates and ₹1,500 to diploma holders who are unemployed.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, at an event in Shivamogga, handed over cheques to six beneficiaries to symbolically kickstart the scheme meant for graduates and diploma holders who passed in 2022-23 and have remained jobless even after six months after completion of education. He said that the scheme is crucial at a time when unemployment rate, which was 5.5% in 2014, now stands at 10.5%. The stipend will be given only for two years, and it will end soon after the beneficiary gets a job.

FULL REPORT ON
» PAGE 10

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The birth of her daughter Shai has given the former World No. 1 new purpose, fuelling her return to the court. The four-time Major champion has big goals for her 'second chapter' — but, thanks to an improved perspective about winning and losing, she wants to enjoy every moment of it

The second coming of Naomi Osaka

GETTY IMAGES

Reuters
Associated Press

The world of tennis waited with bated breath for Naomi Osaka's comeback.

There were moments during her time away from the game when fans anxiously wondered whether they had seen the last of the former World No. 1 on a competitive tennis court.

Osaka didn't play last year's Australian Open and later revealed she was pregnant. She and her partner, rapper Cordae, became parents to daughter Shai in July.

More than a tennis player

Given her interests outside of tennis – she is an entrepreneur with several business interests, a self-confessed "fashion nerd" who debuted a collection she co-designed at the New York Fashion Week, and a social change advocate with a strong track record – the thought of her walking away from the game in her mid-20s was not implausible.

Just as significantly, Osaka had spoken in the past about struggling with her mental health. She withdrew from Roland-Garros 2021 after the bitter fallout from her decision to boycott all media activity at the Grand Slam, revealing that she had "suffered long bouts of depression" and that certain lines of questioning adversely impacted her mental health. She had spoken, too, of being "spent physically" and of how her "joy went away for the sport".

Why would Osaka want to return to the all-consuming world of professional tennis? Having already scaled the peaks – she is one of three players in the Open Era, Monica Seles and Roger Federer the others, to have won their first four Major finals – did she have the motivation?

The 26-year-old answered both questions at the Brisbane International, her first tournament back. She won her first match since late 2022, in straight sets against Tamara Korpatsch, and showed enough in her three-set defeat to Karolina Pliskova, another former World No. 1, to suggest that her preparations for the Australian Open were on track.

> Giving birth was one of the most painful things I've ever gone through. It's definitely made me feel like physically I can handle a lot

The birth of Shai, she said, had given her new purpose and fuelled her comeback. "Giving birth was one of the most painful things I've ever gone through. It's definitely made me feel like physically I can handle a lot," she said. "I want to show Shai that she's capable of everything, so that's one of my main purposes why I want to be back out here. She has affected my goals in a positive way. I think I want to achieve a lot more and I feel like it's better to have big goals and achieve half of them rather than set little goals and surpass what you've dreamed of."

Osaka said she was excited for "chapter two of this tennis journey". "I consider this a second chapter. Even stepping on the court is a personal win because a couple of weeks ago I was even doubting if I could play with everyone. So I guess these two matches that I've had kind of prove to me that I am doing OK, and the year is just going to get better."

A better perspective

Becoming a mother has also given her a better perspective, helping her deal with the pressures of top-flight tennis. It has sharpened her focus on living in the moment.

> I want to show Shai that she's capable of everything, so that's one of my main purposes why I want to be back out here. She has affected my goals in a positive way and helped me with the way I view things

"It's a big change overnight. [Shai] has helped me grow up so much so quickly. On the court it's just helping me be strong and staying in the moment more. A part of me feels like Shai [is] watching me. I want to do my best for her," she said.

"Off the court I appreciate people a lot more – even my opponents. I feel like I'm more confident with who I am as a person. I never tried to have conversations with other players before, and I think I definitely put a large wall up. Now I find myself interacting with people.

"I think I'm a lot more open-minded and a lot more patient. But also I feel a lot stronger, I don't know physically, but I think Shai definitely helped me with the way I view things. The last couple years that I played before I had my daughter, I didn't return as much love as I was given. So I really feel like that's what I want to do in this chapter."

Osaka also felt her attitude to winning and losing – "When I win, I don't feel happy. I feel more like relief. And then when I lose, I feel very sad," she once said – had changed. "I've trained so hard since giving birth, I need to enjoy these moments... Of course I feel sad, but the sadness is me being like, 'Aww, I wish I could have done better, because I'm spending so much time away from her [Shai], so I want it to be worth it somehow.'"

Osaka's return has the potential to alter the competitive shape of the women's game. Iga Swiatek's dominance, in the post-Ash Barty period, has been challenged by Aryna Sabalenka, Elena Rybakina and Coco Gauff. Osaka has the game to beat anybody on her day – even if she takes time to reach a high level consistently, she's still a dangerous X-factor in any draw.

A difference-maker

"She has such a huge game, huge shots. I think having the mindset, the will and the shots, she can really do some damage," Patrick Mouratoglou, former coach of Serena Williams, told *Eurosport*. "She will be ready for the Australian Open. She will just lack matches. So we'll know quite fast if she's able to be competitive immediately or if she will need a bit more time to become competitive. But I feel she will be competitive straight away."

The Australian Open, where she is a two-time champion and owns a 24-5 (83% win-rate) record, may be too soon to expect a deep run. But there is no doubt that her presence will increase the starpower in Melbourne next week.

"[Her return] is the best news for women's tennis," said Mouratoglou. "The WTA needs superstars. We had so many great years with Serena and Venus [Williams] and Maria Sharapova, who are three really huge stars. It draws a lot of attention to women's tennis when you have players like that. So I'm very excited that Naomi comes back. I think she's great."

Osaka feels "pretty good where I am right now" in terms of her game – this early in her comeback, however, she is still taking baby steps. But like she said after her first win back in Brisbane, compared to the challenge of getting a newborn to sleep, closing out a tennis match is just that tad easier.

STACKING UP

ATP Men's Top 15

#	Player	Age	Points	Events
1	Novak Djokovic	36	11,055	19
2	Carlos Alcaraz	20	8,855	18
3	Daniil Medvedev	27	7,555	21
4	Jannik Sinner	22	6,490	22
5	Andrey Rublev	26	5,010	25
6	Alexander Zverev	26	4,275	27
7	Stefanos Tsitsipas	25	4,025	24
8	Holger Rune	20	3,815	23
9	Hubert Hurkacz	26	3,320	24
10	Alex de Minaur	24	2,950	25
11	Casper Ruud	25	2,910	24
12	Taylor Fritz	26	2,840	26
13	Grigor Dimitrov	32	2,775	23
14	Tommy Paul	26	2,665	26
15	Karen Khachanov	27	2,475	22

Top Indians ▶

Sumit Nagal
Rank 139 ▼ 1 spot

Ramkumar Ramanathan
Rank 475 ▼ 35 spots

WTA Women's Top 15

#	Player	Age	Points	Events
1	Iga Swiatek	22	9,880	19
2	Aryna Sabalenka	25	8,905	16
3	Elena Rybakina	24	6,811	18
4	Coco Gauff	19	6,660	19
5	Jessica Pegula	29	5,905	20
6	Ons Jabeur	29	4,076	20
7	Marketa Vondrousova	24	3,966	16
8	Maria Sakkari	28	3,770	24
9	Karolina Muchova	27	3,590	14
10	Barbora Krejcikova	28	2,945	21
11	Beatriz Haddad Maia	27	2,920	23
12	Jelena Ostapenko	26	2,883	23
13	Qinwen Zheng	21	2,790	23
14	Liudmila Samsonova	25	2,760	24
15	Daria Kasatkina	26	2,758	25

Top Indians ▶

Ankita Raina
Rank 223 ▼ 2 spots

Karman Thandi
Rank 334 ▲▼ No change

English Premier League Standings

#	Team	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1	Liverpool	20	13	6	1	43	18	25	45
2	Aston Villa	20	13	3	4	43	27	16	42
3	Man. City	19	12	4	3	45	21	24	40
4	Arsenal	20	12	4	4	37	20	17	40
5	Tottenham	20	12	3	5	42	29	13	39
6	West Ham	20	10	4	6	33	30	3	34
7	Brighton	20	8	7	5	38	33	5	31
8	Man. United	20	10	1	9	22	27	-5	31
9	Newcastle	20	9	2	9	39	29	10	29
10	Chelsea	20	8	4	8	34	31	3	28
11	Wolves	20	8	4	8	30	31	-1	28
12	Bournemouth	19	7	4	8	28	35	-7	25
13	Fulham	20	7	3	10	28	35	-7	24
14	C. Palace	20	5	6	9	22	29	-7	21
15	N. Forest	20	5	5	10	24	35	-11	20
16	Brentford	19	5	4	10	26	31	-5	19
17	Everton *	20	8	2	10	24	28	-4	16
18	Luton Town	19	4	3	12	23	37	-14	15
19	Burnley	20	3	2	15	20	41	-21	11
20	Sheffield	20	2	3	15	15	49	-34	9

Everton deducted 10 points following a breach of the Premier League's Profitability and Sustainability Rules. The decision is currently under appeal

Italian Serie A Standings

#	Team	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1	Inter Milan	19	15	3	1	44	9	35	48
2	Juventus	19	14	4	1	29	12	17	46
3	AC Milan	19	12	3	4	35	20	15	39
4	Fiorentina	19	10	3	6	27	19	8	33
5	Bologna	19	8	8	3	22	16	6	32
6	Atalanta	19	9	3	7	30	21	9	30
7	Lazio	19	9	3	7	23	20	3	30
8	Roma	19	8	5	6	31	21	10	29
9	Napoli	19	8	4	7	28	24	4	28
10	Torino	19	7	6	6	18	18	0	27
11	Monza	19	6	7	6	19	20	-1	25
12	Genoa	19	5	6	8	20	24	-4	21
13	Lecce	19	4	9	6	20	25	-5	21
14	Sassuolo	19	5	4	10	26	33	-7	19
15	Frosinone	19	5	4	10	25	34	-9	19
16	Udinese	19	2	11	6	19	30	-11	17
17	Cagliari	19	3	6	10	17	32	-15	15
18	Verona	19	3	5	11	16	26	-10	14
19	Empoli	19	3	4	12	10	33	-23	13
20	Salernitana	19	2	6	11	16	38	-22	12

Spanish LaLiga Standings

#	Team	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1	Real Madrid	19	15	3	1	40	11	29	48
2	Girona	19	15	3	1	46	24	22	48
3	Barcelona	19	12	5	2	36	22	14	41
4	Athletic Bilbao	19	11	5	3	36	19	17	38
5	Atletico Madrid	19	12	2	5	39	23	16	38
6	Real Sociedad	19	8	8	3	30	19	11	32
7	Real Betis	19	6	10	3	21	20	1	28
8	Getafe	19	6	8	5	24	25	-1	26
9	Valencia	19	7	5	7	22	23	-1	26
10	Las Palmas	19	7	4	8	16	17	-1	25
11	Rayo Vallecano	19	5	8	6	18	24	-6	23
12	Osasuna	19	6	4	9	22	29	-7	22
13	Villarreal	19	5	4	10	27	38	-11	19
14	Real Mallorca	19	3	9	7	17	23	-6	18
15	Alaves	19	4	5	10	15	25	-10	17
16	Sevilla	19	3	7	9	23	27	-4	16
17	Celta Vigo	19	3	7	9	20	29	-9	16
18	Cadiz	19	2	9	8	14	26	-12	15
19	Granada	19	2	5	12	22	40	-18	11
20	Almeria	19	0	5	14	19	43	-24	5

German Bundesliga Standings

#	Team	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1	Leverkusen	16	13	3	0	46	12	34	42
2	Bayern	15	12	2	1	49	15	34	38
3	Stuttgart	16	11	1	4	37	19	18	34
4	RB Leipzig	16	10	3	3	38	17	21	33
5	Dortmund	16	7	6	3	30	25	5	27
6	Eint. Frankfurt	16	6	6	4	26	20	6	24
7	Hoffenheim	16	7	3	6	32	30	2	24
8	SC Freiburg	16	7	3	6	21	26	-5	24
9	Heidenheim	16	6	2	8	25	32	-7	20
10	Wolfsburg	16	6	1	9	20	27	-7	19
11	FC Augsburg	16	4	6	6	24	31	-7	18
12	M'gladbach	16	4	5	7	31	35	-4	17
13	Werder	16	4	4	8	23	30	-7	16
14	Bochum	16	3	7	6	18	33	-15	16
15	Union Berlin	15	4	1	10	17	31	-14	13
16	Mainz	16	1	7	8	13	28	-15	10
17	Cologne	16	2	4	10	10	28	-18	10
18	SV Darmstadt	16	2	4	10	20	41	-21	10

Test Batting

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Kane Williamson	864	919
2	Joe Root	859	923
3	Steve Smith	818	947
4	Marnus Labuschagne	802	937
5	Daryl Mitchell	786	786
6	Virat Kohli	775	937
7	Harry Brook	773	773
8	Babar Azam	768	882
9	Usman Khawaja	764	847
10	Rohit Sharma	748	813

Test Bowling

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	R. Ashwin	863	904
2	Pat Cummins	858	914
3	Kagiso Rabada	851	902
4	Jasprit Bumrah	787	834
5	Ravindra Jadeja	774	899
6	Ollie Robinson	762	820
7	Josh Hazlewood	761	864
8	James Anderson	761	903
9	Mitchell Starc	753	807
10	Prabath Jayasuriya	751	781

ODI Batting

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Babar Azam	824	898
2	Shubman Gill	801	847
3	Virat Kohli	768	909
4	Rohit Sharma	746	882
5	David Warner	745	869
6	Daryl Mitchell	728	750
7	Harry Tector	723	729
8	Dawid Malan	707	730
9	Rassie van der Dussen	701	796
10	Shai Hope	699	802

ODI Bowling

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Keshav Maharaj	716	741
2	Josh Hazlewood	703	727
3	Mohammed Siraj	678	736
4	Adam Zampa	675	695
5	Rashid Khan	667	799
6	Jasprit Bumrah	665	838
7	Shaheen Afridi	650	688
8	Mohammad Nabi	648	657
9	Kuldeep Yadav	645	760
10	Trent Boult	643	775

T20I Batting

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Suryakumar Yadav	887	910
2	Philip Salt	802	802
3	Mohammad Rizwan	787	875
4	Aiden Markram	755	796
5	Babar Azam	734	896
6	Rilee Rossouw	689	724
7	Jos Buttler	680	687
8	Ruturaj Gaikwad	674	700
9	Reeza Hendricks	660	674
10	Dawid Malan	657	915

T20I Bowling

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Adil Rashid	726	746
2	Ravi Bishnoi	685	699
3	Akeal Hosein	683	683
4	Wanindu Hasaranga	679	797
5	Maheesh Theekshana	677	684
6	Rashid Khan	671	816
7	Mitchell Santner	657	724
8	Tabraiz Shamsi	654	821
9	Fazalhaq Farooqi	648	692
10	Reece Topley	643	662

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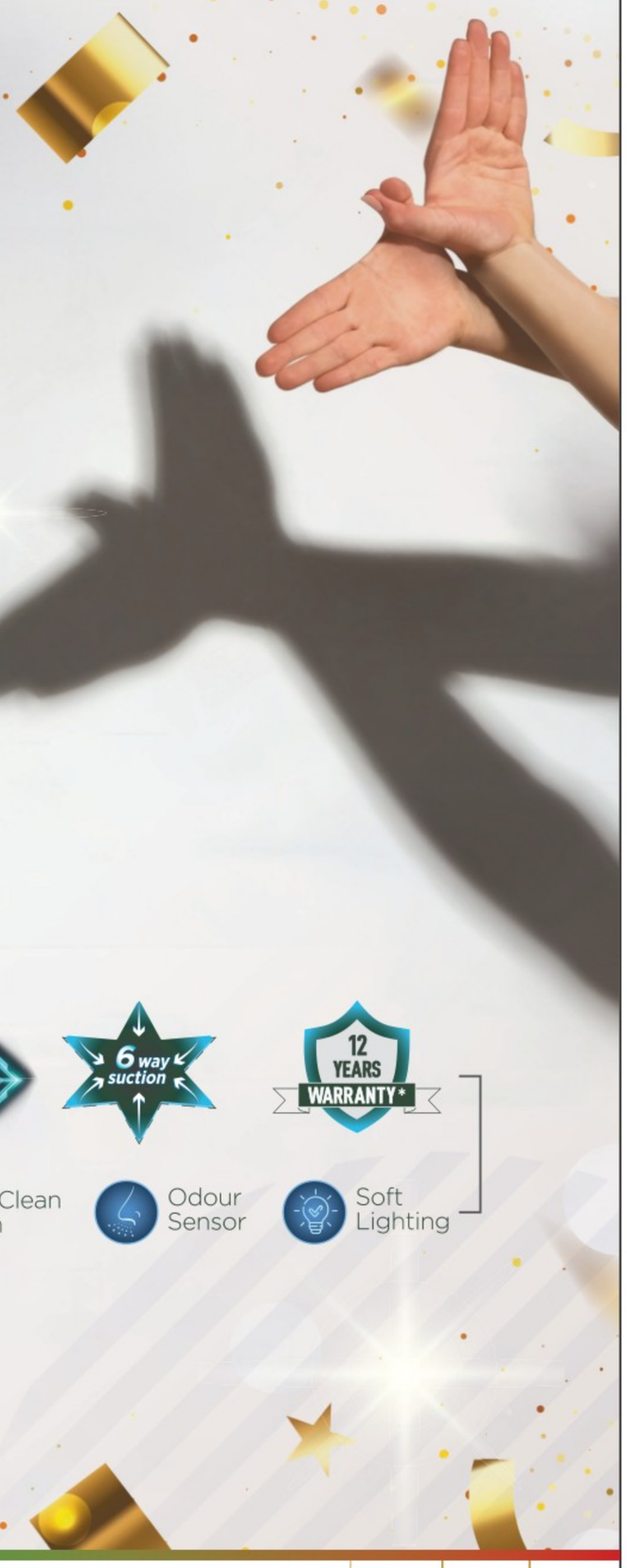

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‘As franchise leagues kidnap the game, Test cricket must find windows’

A former player, one of cricket’s best-known voices and now MCC president, Mark Nicholas has had a ringside view of the sport for almost five decades. In this conversation, he offers his views on the state of the game, the best he has seen, his commentary career, and who he thinks cricket’s most influential figure is

INTERVIEW

Mark Nicholas

P.K. Ajith Kumar

Mark Nicholas wears many hats. The latest one is that of the president of the MCC. He is among cricket’s finest commentators – he succeeded the legendary Richie Benaud as anchor of Channel Nine’s cricket coverage – and a perceptive writer on the game. He never played for England, but skippered its ‘A’ side. For a decade he was captain at Hampshire, where he led the likes of Malcolm Marshall, Gordon Greenidge and Robin Smith. He spoke to *The Hindu* at Cape Town during the second Test between South Africa and India. Excerpts:

Are you concerned about the future of Test cricket, as many people are?

I think Test cricket is going to have to find windows. As the franchise tournaments continue to almost kidnap the game, in a way, and then demand ransoms, probably the best thing everybody can do is find a couple of windows a year, maybe Christmas and New Year into January and June and July, maybe July and August, where you play Test match cricket.

Test cricket is very important because the skills that you develop to be a Test player are the skills that make you an attractive short-form player. So if every short-form player is only developed on batsmen clearing their left side and being able to score 360, and bowlers having a variety of balls to contain batsmen that includes yorkers and into-the-pitch slower balls, the great skills of the game, the cover-drive and the out-swinger and the in-swinger and the back-cut... all those things will be compromised over time.

How important is the MCC’s role today?

Well, I think it needs to be more important again. There is a need for some global relevance, not a power grab, not at all. And what India has done for cricket is remarkable, too many people question it because they like zoning in on the fact that India makes all the money, but India makes all the play.

> What India has done for cricket is remarkable, too many people question it because they like zoning in on the fact that India makes all the money, but India makes all the play

You know, India is the country that sets everybody else up. So, I have no problem with that. What I do think is that the game could receive more pastoral care. And the ICC could make a better thought of sharing its annual income. The MCC can have a global ambassadorial role. It can connect people. It can maybe bring the game together.

GETTY IMAGES

Anything you would particularly like to do as MCC president?

Yes, I want to bring the world game together, to talk to one another. I want to improve or modernise the Cowdrey Lecture. I want to do [more] with the charities and the hubs. I want to look closer at getting women into MCC quicker than it is happening at the moment. It is ridiculous how long it is taking. I want to explore the possibilities of MCC. I want MCC to be owning a franchise in The Hundred.

You were close to Malcolm Marshall.

Marshall was, you know, in many ways my closest friend in cricket. I gave the eulogy at his funeral. He was an incredible bowler, and an incredible man, a brave man when he was ill, a strong, committed man when he played cricket. He was fantastically skilful. He had natural ability, but he worked very hard to develop his talent. You know, mastering the out-swinger was then followed up by mastering the in-swinger.

I would say that it was the graft. It was the hours put in. Even with Shane Warne, you know, the hours put in. I knew Shane very well. I wrote his book. The hours he put in to become the bowler he became really told you the most about him. You know, these things don’t come easy, however gifted you may have been born.

How was it facing Marshall in the nets at Hampshire?

Well, I got exposed a fair bit. You know, he would zip it around, really. He would work on moving the ball. The only person I saw him really run in quickly to was Gordon Greenidge, who asked him to just get his feet going. And I think in the confines of a net, in that claustrophobic environment, to have a fast bowler running in is pretty horrendous. But I used to get hit on the inside thigh a lot and play and miss a lot, like the rest of us, I think.

Where would you put Marshall in the list of great fast bowlers?

Dennis Lillee, Malcolm Marshall and Wasim Akram are the three greatest fast bowlers I have seen, with Andy Roberts close behind and Imran Khan close behind that. Probably in all conditions, I would say Marshall would get the nod, primarily because of how good he was on the subcontinent.

Now, you might say, Akram was pretty good on the subcontinent, but I would say that from England to Australia, to India, to Pakistan, to the West Indies, to New Zealand, Marshall probably had the most game, the most options. Lillee was a master of his art without any doubt at all.

Glenn McGrath, who was a very simple bowler, a bit like Curtly Ambrose, a bit like Richard Hadlee, just came in, hit the right lengths, hit the seam, and could work batsmen around the crease. They were three great bowlers too. And I would include Roberts in that group of bowlers with extraordinary levels of skill.

> Dennis Lillee, Malcolm Marshall and Wasim Akram are the three greatest fast bowlers I have seen, with Andy Roberts close behind and Imran Khan close behind that

Did you imagine that television commentary would become your career?

Well, I always hoped so. So I went to *Sky* and asked them for a job. I was told to bugger off.

And I rang them in Australia. I was working as a journalist for *The Telegraph* in Australia. And I kept stopping the producer and saying, I am here if you want me. And he rang me during the second Test and said someone had taken ill. I can’t remember who. I was staying with a friend in Brisbane. And I hadn’t gone to the first day of the second Test. He said, ‘Get your backside down here and you can have a day’s work.’ And the next Test he offered me two days of work. And the next Test, three days of work. And by the fifth Test, I was doing the whole thing. And then they offered me a job.

In your decades-long association with cricket, what has surprised you most?

World Series Cricket. It just burst on the scene from behind closed doors. And Kerry Packer changed everything. He was the most influential man arguably in the history of the game. I thought World Series Cricket was amazing. I left school and went to Australia in the second year of it. Played some club cricket and I watched every ball of it. I couldn’t get enough. I loved it. I would say that it is probably the most momentous thing to have happened to cricket in my time.

I mean, there have been some less pleasant things, like the sort of sudden explosion of match-fixing, and the awful publicity for the game.

When I go to my grave, I can’t believe I will ever be more amazed by the impact that one man could have. And that was Kerry Packer in World Series Cricket.

GAME THEORY

End of an era: Warner, Elgar bow out

The New Year’s Tests in Sydney and Cape Town brought the curtain down on the careers of two long-tenured opening batters. David Warner (debut: Dec 1, 2011) and Dean Elgar (debut: Nov 30, 2012) dealt with the new ball in contrasting fashions and were crucial to the fortunes of Australia and South Africa respectively. While Warner often went after the bowling, Elgar was adept at absorbing the pressure in the seam-friendly conditions of South Africa. A look at how their stints at the top of the order measure against other openers in their era as well as at where Warner ranks among new-ball destroyers:

Warner

MOST RUNS AS TEST OPENER SINCE DECEMBER 1, 2011 SOURCE: ESPNcricinfo

Rank	Player	Tests	Innings	Not outs	Runs	Highest	Avg.	100s | 50s
1	**David Warner (AUS)**	**112**	**202**	**8**	**8,747**	**335***	**45.08**	**26 | 37**
2	Alastair Cook (ENG)	89	165	8	6,555	263	41.75	14 | 31
3	Dimuth Karunaratne (SL)	87	163	6	6,538	244	41.64	16 | 33
4	Kraigg Brathwaite (WI)	81	154	10	5,166	212	35.87	12 | 26
5	Tom Latham (NZ)	75	131	5	5,137	264*	40.76	13 | 27
6	**Dean Elgar (SA)**	**78**	**141**	**9**	**5,121**	**199**	**38.79**	**13 | 23**
7	Tamim Iqbal (BAN)	48	91	2	3,406	206	38.26	6 | 21
8	M. Vijay (IND)	48	84	1	3,344	167	40.28	11 | 13
9	Usman Khawaja (AUS)	29	51	6	2,583	195*	57.40	7 | 13
10	K.L. Rahul (IND)	44	75	2	2,551	199	34.94	7 | 12
11	Shikhar Dhawan (IND)	34	58	1	2,315	190	40.61	7 | 5
12	Aiden Markram (SA)	33	60	1	2,289	152	38.79	7 | 10
13	Mohammad Hafeez (PAK)	32	60	3	2,289	224	40.15	7 | 5
14	Rohit Sharma (IND)	27	45	3	2,152	212	51.23	7 | 6
15	Chris Rogers (AUS)	24	46	1	1,996	173	44.35	5 | 14

FASTEST STRIKE-RATES AS TEST OPENER; MINIMUM 2,000 RUNS

Rank	Player	Innings	Runs	Balls	Avg.	Strike-rate
1	Virender Sehwag (IND/ICC)	170	8,207	9,875	50.04	**83.10**
2	Tillakaratne Dilshan (SL)	53	2,170	3,041	42.54	**71.35**
3	David Warner (AUS)	202	8,747	12,421	45.08	**70.42**
4	Shikhar Dhawan (IND)	58	2,315	3,458	40.61	**66.94**
5	Sanath Jayasuriya (SL)	152	5,932	8,997	41.48	**65.93**
6	K. Srikkanth (IND)	72	2,062	2,737+	29.88	**62.87***
7	Aiden Markram (SA)	60	2,289	3,759	38.79	**60.89**
8	Chris Gayle (WI)	173	7,028	11,575	43.11	**60.71**
9	Matthew Hayden (AUS)	184	8,625	14,349	50.73	**60.10**
10	Graeme Smith (SA/ICC)	196	9,030	15,087	49.07	**59.85**

Elgar

PICTURE THIS

GETTY IMAGES

2024 tees off

The PGA Tour’s first event of the season, The Sentry, began last week at the stunning Kapalua Golf Club’s Plantation Course in Maui, Hawaii, with the future of golf still under a cloud.

The PGA Tour was unable to finalise a definitive partnership agreement with Saudi Arabia’s Public Investment Fund, the main financial backer of LIV Golf, despite announcing a framework deal last June.

That deal, which came after the PGA Tour lost some high-profile names to LIV Golf, divided the golfing world. It also irked a few US senators, who blasted the June announcement as ‘sportswashing’.

With a partnership still not being agreed, reigning Masters champion Jon Rahm — a consistent voice against LIV Golf before agreeing in December to join the rival league for a deal reportedly in the range of $500 million — was barred from playing at The Sentry.

Rahm was therefore unable to savour the unique pleasures of the Plantation, which was built from open, windswept pineapple fields on the pronounced slope of a volcano and is irrigated by sprinklers pressured solely by gravity.

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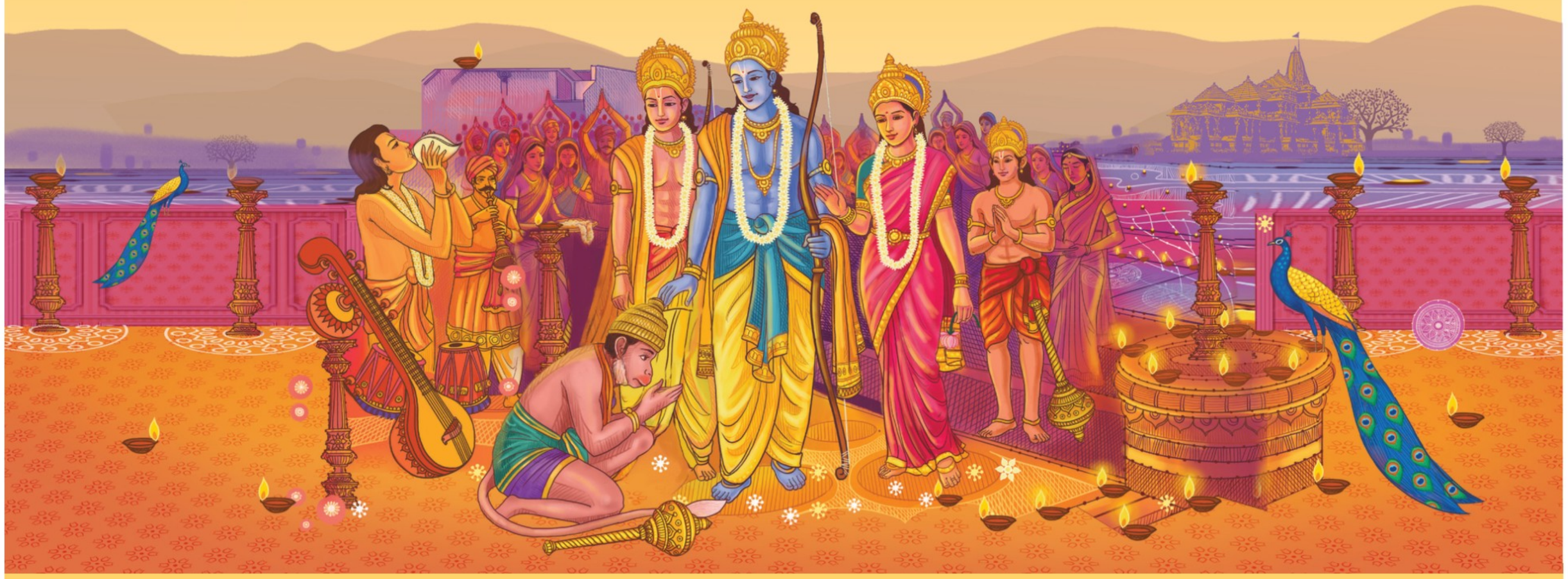

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INBRIEF

CCB police raid bookie counters at BTC

The Central Crime Branch (CCB) police on Friday conducted surprise checks at the bookie counters at Bangalore Turf Club (BTC) and confiscated cash and documents. The raids were carried out based on a complaint alleging unauthorised collection of an inflated ticket amount from people visiting BTC. According to the police, there were also allegations that these counters also cheated the State exchequer by avoiding GST.

Garment shops selling counterfeit goods raided

The Central Crime Branch (CCB) police on Friday raided two garment shops on Commercial Street for allegedly selling fake branded clothes and accessories to customers. The CCB police seized such clothes worth ₹23.9 lakh. Police officials said the two shops on Commercial Street and one in Shivajinagar were allegedly producing counterfeit garments under the guise of a reputable brand. The shopkeepers were making a profit by selling these fake products. The police seized clothes, belts, shoes, and other accessories. Cases were filed under various sections of the Copyright Act, 1957.

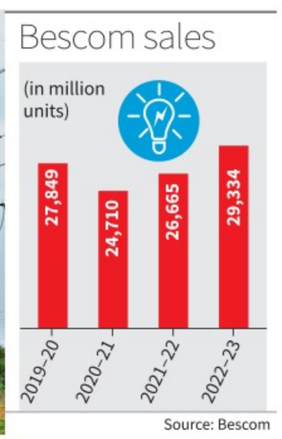
Power shutdown today

There will be a disruption in power supply on Saturday between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. in the areas serviced from 66/11-kV Kanteerva station in view of carrying out quarterly maintenance work. According to a release from Bescom, East Circle, the areas to be affected are Cubbonpet 3rd Cross to 6th Cross, Nrupatunga Road, Nagarathpet Main Road, KAS Lane, Cubbonpet, 13 to 15th Cross, OTC Road, S.P. Road, and SJP Road.

Bescom registers a steady increase of electricity sales

Growth of sales observed in both HT and LT categories, with the latter being major contributor

Jahnavi T.R.
BENGALURU



Source: Bescom

The sale of electricity by Bangalore Electricity Supply Company (Bescom) has consistently gone up post the COVID-19 pandemic years, the data provided by the company has shown.

In the financial year (FY) of 2022-23, Bescom sold over 29,000 million units (MU) of power, which is more than the 27,849 MU it had sold during the pre-pandemic period (FY 2019-20). Until November 2023, Bescom has already sold 23,665 MU electricity.

Gruha Jyothi scheme

The growth of sales has been observed in both high-tension (HT) and low-tension (LT) categories, with the latter being the major contributor. In FY 2020-21, the company had sold 18,464 MU of power to LT consumers while in 2022-23, the sales touched 20,488 MU. According to a senior official in Bescom, the LT numbers are expected to rise further owing to the introduction of the Gruha Jyothi scheme.

Even in HT sales, there was an increase from 6,245 MU in 2020-21 to 8,845 MU in 2022-23. Even in FY 2023-24, the sales had touched 6,593 MU by November itself. Over the years, Bescom has been taking several steps to keep HT consumers from choosing open-access suppliers.

Energy charges

One such scheme is the Discounted Energy Rate Scheme (DERS), which encourages industries to use more power by providing it at a discounted price. During the tariff revision in May 2023, the Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission (KERC) reduced the energy charges under the DERS from ₹6 per unit to ₹5.

Senior officials from the Finance Department of Bescom said the DERS was one of the main reasons for HT sales increasing over the years, along with the good health of the economy.

ToD tariff system

"After the pandemic, as the revival of the economy began, more industries and commercial establishments, large buildings are up and running. With our Time of Day (ToD) tariff system and other benefiting schemes, these new establishments chose Bescom instead of open access and thus accelerated our sales," an official said.

The increasing sales of the electricity utility, which is expected to continue even in FY 2024-25, is also expected to help in bringing down the revenue deficit in the upcoming years. "Better sales, especially in HT, will result in a better Annual Revenue Requirement (ARR) which in turn helps in bridging the revenue gap," a senior official noted.

Bescom had asked for an ARR of ₹62,133.47 crore, out of which the KERC approved an ARR of ₹58,109.95 crore during the tariff revision in 2023.

Despite crackdown, 'courier scam' continues unabated

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Among the recent victims are a retired bank employee couple, who told the police that they lost ₹10 lakh to the scam. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

A day after the Special Investigation Team (SIT) formed by Bengaluru Police Commissioner B. Dayananda to probe the 'FedEx courier scam' unearthed a case and arrested a gang of 14 people operating pan India recently, a couple who are retired bank employees approached the police with a complaint that they had lost ₹10 lakh to the same scam, indicating how the racket is continuing unabated.

The victims told the police that the gang first posed as representatives of 'FedEx' and later, posing as "Mumbai crime branch police", spoke to them for over three days to force them to share their bank details by threatening them with an FIR and arrest, managed to get access to their bank details and transferred money online.

The couple are among the three complainants after the arrest of the 14-member gang, a senior police officer who is part of the investigation said.

According to him, the accused operate from different parts of the country as everything is carried out online. The accused, many a time, are not known to each other and some of them are not even aware that they are a part of the racket, he added.

Many players

"The accused operate in multiple layers and the investigating team could manage to reach only two levels, while the rest of the accused working in other parts of the country and some operating even from outside the country are still at large. This means that they are operating the racket with many players and the arrest of the accused is just one component," the officer added.

Citing an example, the police said that one of the accused arrested, Nimshad – a third-semester BCom student who was nabbed from his home in Malappuram, Kerala – was handling over 50 mule bank accounts borrowed from unsuspecting people.

The police said the arrested 14 were facilitators operating mule accounts, maintaining them, withdrawing money after a series of transactions, and handing over the amount to their handlers. "We are yet to reach the main handlers," said an officer. The police have frozen ₹25.4 lakh of the ₹2.1 crore lost in six cases registered in Bengaluru.

Deputy Commissioner of Police Kuldeep Kumar R. Jain said upon checking details on the National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal, it was found that the accounts identified in the scam were part of 546 cybercrime cases registered nationwide. According to the police, 335 cybercrime cases related to the 'FedEx courier scam' were reported in Bengaluru in 2023.

"The best way to contain this scam is to spread awareness among people. People should realise that no police officers or enforcement agency would demand the details of bank accounts. If a person gets a random call accusing them of some illegal activities, s/he should not panic if s/he is innocent. The best way to deal with this is to cut the call or call the police control room or 112 to report the matter," Mr. Jain said.

Single-window panel approves 73 proposals worth over ₹3,900 cr.

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Karnataka government on Friday cleared 73 projects cumulatively valued ₹3,935.52 crore. These projects have a scope to generate 15,000 jobs across the State.

The largest projects include those submitted by city-based firms ETL Secure Space and DhaSH PV Technologies with an outlay of ₹490.5 crore and ₹346.35 crore, respectively.

Equitable investment

M.B. Patil, Minister for Large, and Medium Industries, said these projects cleared by the 142nd State-Level Single-Window Clearance Committee would ensure equitable investment across the diverse regions of the State.

Many of the projects approved by the State-Level Single-Window Clearance Committee would be implemented in the districts of North Karnataka, he said.

Big projects

Mylar Infra's ₹339.84-crore proposal to set up a multi feed-based distillery in Huvinahadagali in Ballari, and Sango India Automotive Parts' ₹278.59-crore investment towards an exhaust system manufacturing plant at Harohalli in Ramanagara were part of the large projects approved by the committee in the districts outside Bengaluru.

Darshan, others give statements before police in pub case

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Kannada actor Darshan Thoogudeepa, Dhananjay, Chikkanna, Abhishek Ambareesh, and film producer and actor Rockline Venkatesh, along with others, appeared before the Subramanyanagar police on Friday to provide statements regarding an FIR filed against them recently.

They are facing allegations of engaging in a celebration at a pub in Rajajinagar beyond the permissible hours on January 4. The police issued notices to them for extending their gathering at the pub past 1 a.m., where they had gathered to celebrate the success of Darshan's recent film, *Kaatera*. As the police interrogated the actors, a large crowd of fans assembled in front of the station, causing a traffic jam on Dr. Rajkumar Road.

The police have issued notices to the actors.

An FIR has also been registered against Shashirekha, the proprietor of the restobar, and Prashantha, its manager, under sections 36B and 41 of the Karnataka Excise Act, as well as sections 103 and 109 of the Karnataka Police Act.

State reports 175 more JN.1 cases, taking total to 374

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

After reporting 34 cases of JN.1 on December 25 and 165 cases on January 1, an additional 175 people from Karnataka are found to be infected with the highly transmissible new sub-variant of Omicron. With this, the total JN.1 cases in the State has now touched 374.

This follows whole genome sequencing of 828 samples at the National Institute of Virology, Pune, and the NCBS in Bengaluru. Of the 443 results of samples that have been received till Friday, 84% (374) are infected with JN.1, 7% (30) are found to be positive for XBB and the remaining are other variants.

While the district-wise break up of the JN.1 cases was not made available, officials said over 60% are from Bengaluru. Officials said the reports are of samples that were sent a fortnight ago.

163 new cases

On Friday, 163 new cases and 162 recoveries were reported, reducing the number of active cases to 994. The total number of deaths reported since December 15 has touched 28.

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HSR LAYOUT 95919 42294 | HOSAPET 9591942294 | HUBALI
08073575977/08364850367
HULLIMAVU 89515 68999 | HEGDE NAGAR 8310875820 JAYANAGAR 97383 08373 |
INDIRANAGAR 9739614607 | JP NAGAR 7th PHASE 96115 68499 | KAMMANAHALLI 9945304940 | KOTHANUR 7090940303 | KORAMANGALA 83107 80489 |
KAGGADASAPURA 90350 68386 | KUVEMPU NAGAR 911 3232 906 | KADUGODI
9902698677 / 9902690177 | MANGALURU YEYADI 8243500484
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Distributing e*llu bella* to express solidarity with the keepers of cleanliness

Surabhi Gorebal
BENGALURU

Malleswaram Social will distribute *ellu bella* to nearly 250 individuals from Malleswaram and Yeshwantpur involved in solid waste management. FILE PHOTO

In a display of community spirit, Malleswaram Social, a citizens' group, is set to continue its annual e*llu bella* distribution during Sankranti as a tribute to the unsung heroes of solid waste management. This annual tradition, marking its third consecutive year this time, not only celebrates cultural richness but also serves as a heartfelt gesture to honour approximately 250 individuals from Malleswaram and Yeshwantpur.

Ravi Acharya, a member of Malleswaram Social, said, "This distribution is done for junior health inspectors, auto drivers, and everyone involved in keeping our city clean. We are doing this in return to honour them for their hard work." The decision to specifically honour those involved in solid waste management underscores the importance of acknowledging their often overlooked contribution to the community, he said.

"We work closely with pourakarmikas in our locality, and we try to do something for them on such occasions to appreciate their contribution to society. They do so much for us, and we just want to give them back whatever is possible. We organise an event for them or make some donations on Sankranti or Ugadi. This time we are doing it for Sankranti," said Suchitra Deep, a member of the group. The group's commitment to recognising the efforts of solid waste management personnel, junior health inspectors, and auto drivers exemplifies the essence of community spirit and gratitude. By extending this gesture during the festival, the organisation hopes to convey a message of appreciation and unity, fostering stronger bonds within the community and highlighting the indispensable roles these individuals play in our daily lives.

Foundation Day celebrated

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

UCO Bank's Zonal Office, Bengaluru, celebrated its 82nd Foundation Day on January 6.

The bank conducted a walkathon to create awareness on road safety and its banking products. Besides carrying out several CSR activities throughout the day for underprivileged children at different schools, it had also organised blood donation and free health check-up camps.

Cultural events were organised in the presence of Prasenjit Roy, Zonal Manager, and chief guest, Kannan Venkatachari, former CMD of Vijaya Bank, the bank in a release said.

Timings
BENGALURU

SATURDAY, JAN. 13	
RISE 06:45	SET 18:11
RISE 08:26	SET 20:15
SUNDAY, JAN. 14	
RISE 06:45	SET 18:11
RISE 09:17	SET 21:16
MONDAY, JAN. 15	
RISE 06:45	SET 18:12
RISE 10:02	SET 22:13

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	31	23
Mysuru	32	21
Bengaluru	30	17

Bengaluru Today
27°C A dry weather to prevail. Morning will be cool with mist and haze. Day will be comfortable.Night will be slight cool and hazy.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
28°C The weather will be dry. Morning will be cool with mist and haze. Day will be comfortable. Night will be slight cool and hazy.

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THE HINDU
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UNEARTHING OPPORTUNITIES
INVESTOR AWARENESS PROGRAM
Economy, Markets and Investments (E.M.I.)
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SPEAKER
Mr. Sunil Subramaniam
Managing Director
VENUE
St. Joseph's Institute of Management, Bengaluru,
Loyola Auditorium, 1st Floor,
28/1, Primrose Road, Craig Park Layout, Ashok Nagar,
Bengaluru,
Karnataka - 560 025.
Scan for the Venue
Day: Monday, January 15, 2024
Time: 6:00 PM followed by dinner
Mutual fund investments are subject to market risks, read all scheme related documents carefully.

KIA handled 3.72 crore passengers during 2023

This is an increase of 35% compared to 2022. Of the total, 3.27 crore were domestic passengers

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Bangalore International Airport Ltd. (BIAL), operator of Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) in Bengaluru, reported a notable growth in passenger numbers in calendar year (CY) 2023.

The airport handled 3.72 crore passengers, marking a 35.3% increase when compared with CY 2022. Of these, 3.27 crore were domestic passengers and 45 lakh people travelled to international destinations.

On April 29, 2023, the airport recorded the highest number of passengers in a single day for CY 2023 at 116,688 passengers.

In 2023, factors such as reduced travel limitations, improved economic conditions, and increased demand for leisure and business travel led to a notable rise in growth numbers. The highest number of air traffic movements (ATMs) was witnessed on March 17, 2023, reaching 748 ATMs in a single day.

As compared with this, the highest ATMs on any single day in CY 2022 was 693. Domestic ATMs last year saw a substantial 22% recovery, while international ATMs showed a 15% increase.

On April 29, 2023, Kempegowda International Airport recorded the highest number of passengers on a single day for 2023 at 116,688 passengers. FILE PHOTO

Additionally, according to BIAL, the airport continues to maintain its standing as a reliable hub for handling perishable (PER) cargo in India for the third consecutive year.

New routes

In September 2023, the KIA seamlessly transitioned international operations from T1 to T2, marking a crucial milestone.

November witnessed the launch of Lufthansa's thrice-a-week non-stop Bengaluru-Munich flights, providing enhanced connectivity for travellers. October 2023 marked the introduction of Maldivian Airlines, catering to Male with thrice-weekly operations. Furthermore, five new domestic routes were introduced, contributing to the overall capacity growth. AIX (created by the merger of Air India Express and Air Asia India) commenced domestic operations in October 2023, further diversifying the airline portfolio and expanding connectivity for passengers.

Top routes

Top domestic routes in the calendar year 2023 included Delhi, Mumbai, and Hyderabad.

The KIA served 25 international destinations last year, with Dubai, Singapore, and Doha emerging as the top sectors contributing to the international traffic.

"The airport's strategic focus on global connectivity continues to position it as a key gateway for travel across South and Central India," the BIAL said.

Cargo growth

In terms of cargo traffic, the KIA continues to be India's number one hub for handling perishable cargo for the third consecutive year with a tonnage of 53,751 tonnes in FY 2023.

KIA Cargo processed a total of 422,644 tonnes of cargo during CY 2023, indicating a 2% increase from previous year. The domestic sector soared with an impressive 11% growth, highlighting the KIA's strengthening position as a rapidly growing cargo hub in India.

"Perishables continued to be a key focus, with coriander exports surging by 67%. The export of mangoes reached a three-year tonnage record, achieving a 124% year-on-year growth. 684 tonnes of mangoes were exported, facilitated by an 86% increase in the number of pieces shipped. This accomplishment highlights KIA Cargo's robust cold chain capabilities and dedication to efficient perishable handling," the BIAL said.

It added that July 2023 also marked a significant milestone for KIA Cargo, handling the highest monthly domestic tonnage since the Airport's opening, totalling 16,507 tonnes.

High Court refuses to interfere with NMC decision to not renew permission to G.R. Medical College

FROM THE COURT

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The High Court of Karnataka has refused to interfere with the decision of the National Medical Council (NMC) of not renewing the permission to Mangaluru-based G.R. Medical College for MBBS course for the academic year 2022-23 due to deficiencies in facilities, and to shift 150 students, who were admitted to the college during 2021-22, to other medical colleges in the State.

A Division Bench comprising Justice P.S. Dinesh Kumar and Justice T.G. Shivashankare Gowda passed the order while dismissing the petitions filed by the college, which had questioned the decision of the NMC to not renew permission, and the orders of the NMC and the State government to transfer students to other medical colleges.

The NMC had refused to renew permission after deficiencies of teaching staff by 71%, deficiency of resident doctors by 79%, Out Patient Department attendance of only 30%, bed occupancy of 10%, etc., were found during the surprise inspection conducted on September 5 and 6, 2022.

The Bench refused to accept the contention of the college that the inspection was conducted contrary to the Regulation 8(3)(1) of the Establishment of Medical Colleges Regulation, 1999, which bars inspection of medical institutes two days prior and after the holidays declared for important religious and other festivals. The college had claimed that it had declared a holiday for Onam on September 5. However, the Bench rejected college's claim on finding that Onam was on September 8 in 2022 and there was no holiday declared by the Centre or State government in Karnataka.

The Bench also said that NMC had given sufficient opportunity of hearing to the college before refusing to renew permission, and found no fault in the decisions of the authorities to shift the existing students in the interest of their academic career. A majority of the 150 students had filed petitions seeking transfers.

CET online application access to be hit for five days

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The KEA has said that the online CET-2024 application will be temporarily unavailable to students from January 13 to 17 given the upgradation to be taken up by the Department of School Education and Literacy.

S. Ramya, Executive Director, KEA, stated on Friday that access to the online application will be disabled owing to the unavailability of 'Student Achievement Tracking System (SATS)' services on the four days. Since the application validates students' data through SATS numbers, the non-availability of the latter would not allow the system to carry on the process.

The department will take up the work of migrating the SATS database to the newly-allotted enhanced database on the above mentioned days.

Guest teachers of BBMP schools withdraw strike

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

After promises made by D.K. Shivakumar, Deputy Chief Minister and the Minster of Bengaluru Development, to fulfill some of their demands, guest teachers of the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) schools temporarily withdrew their indefinite strike after four days on Friday.

The representatives of BBMP Schools' Guest Teachers' Association led by former MLC Puttanna met with Mr. Shivakumar late on Thursday night. Their demands include that no guest teachers should be dropped from work and remuneration should not be reduced for any reason after the merger of the BBMP schools with the Department of School Education and Literacy, equal pay for equal work and appointment through the BBMP.

Sources said that the Dy.CM had promised to fulfil all other demands except for regularization of services and requested them to withdraw the strike for the sake of the children's future, after which the guest teachers temporarily called off the strike and attended classes on Friday.

"The Dy.CM's assurances have brought relief. However, we have demanded that the assurance be given in written form. If the government does not give assurance in written form, we will start an indefinite strike again," a guest teacher told *The Hindu*.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This notice is issued on behalf of my clients **Smt.Manjula Srinath** to bring to the notice of the general public that the Original Sale deed dt.06.09.1991, registered dt.10.09.1991, Doc.No.3389/91-92 of Book I, Vol-357, pages 35-38, in the office of the Sub-Registrar Kengeri Bangalore in respect of Property bearing Khatha No.382/125/1, H.L.No.19, measuring East to West 30ft and North to South 50ft, total measuring 1500 Sq.ft., has been lost at the time of travelling. All the persons are hereby informed not to deal or carry out any transaction with anyone on the basis of the said Sale deed. If anyone has already carried out or being carried out kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within **7 days** from this present along with that Police
Complaint is also given in JP Nagar 2nd Phase Police Station, Bangalore, dated 09.11.2009 by **Sri.G.Srinath husband of Smt. Manjula Srinath.**

Y. Sowmya Yadav, Advocate
Samvruddhi Legal, # 83, Ground Floor, 5th 'A' Cross, 21st Main, J.P. Nagar 2nd Phase, Bangalore-78. **M : 9916343921**

PUBLIC NOTICE

This notice is issued on behalf of my clients **Smt.K.Geetha Paramahamsa** to bring to the notice of the general public that the Original Gift deed dated 10.03.2008, Doc No.6696/2007-08 of Book I and CD.No.JPND21 in the office of the Sub-Registrar JP Nagar Bangalore in respect of one Half of Undivided share in Site bearing Corporation No.13, Old No.3, Khatha No.64/2, Situated at Gurumurthappa Garden Compound, Shakambarinagar, JP Nagar, previously Sarakki Village, Uttarahalli Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, Bangalore, measuring East to West 44 feet and North to South 114 feet, total measuring 5016 Sq.ft., has been lost at the time of travelling. All the persons are hereby informed not to deal or carry out any transaction with anyone on the basis of the said Sale deed. If anyone has already carried out or being carried out kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 7 days from this present along with that Police Complaint is also given vide Lost Report No. 0884990/2024, dated 11.01.2024.

Y.Sowmya Yadav, Advocate
No.83, Ground Floor, 5th 'A' Cross, 21st Main, J.P.Nagar 2nd Phase, Near J.P.Nagar Police Station, Bangalore-560078. Contact No - 9916343921.

PUBLIC NOTICE

THEFT OF ORIGINAL SALE DEED

This is to inform the public that the original Sale deed dated 28-02-2007, executed by 1.Sri.M.Padmanabha S/o, Manickam, 2. Sri.Murali S. Reddy S/o, C.T.Sampath Reddy, 3. Smt.Sujatha Ramanujam W/o, late Keshava Ramanujam, and 4. Dr. Satish Kumar S/o, late Keshava Ramanujam, in favour of Sri.B.Poorna Chandra Reddy S/o, Seena Reddy, registered as Document No.3957/2007, respecting the lands situated in Eluvapally Village, Hosur Taluk, has been stolen from the Car No.KA02 MJ 7632, when it was parked in front of Hotel Keerthana, Hosur Main Road at 7.30 PM on 02-09-2023. The matter has been reported to Suryanagar Police Station, Anekal Sub-division, Bengaluru District on 03-09-2023 Vide: Crime No.0356/2023.
Public/Financial Institutions/Banks are hereby requested not to make any kind of transaction with the persons possessing the above mentioned stolen Sale Deed and inform the undersigned if they come across persons possessing the stolen sale deed.

Description of lands

Lands situated in Eluvapally Village, Hosur Taluk attached to Hosur Sub-Registration District, Krishnagiri Registration District, Krishnagiri District:
1. Sy.no.121/1, Dry, Extent Hec 7.48.0, Asst.Rs.20.72np Ac 18.48 (full land) with boundaries:
East: Sy.No.106, 120 and 118,
West : Nalluru village boundry,
North : Sy.No.97,
South Sy.Nos.117 & 121/2
2. Sy.No.121/3, Dry, Extent Hec 0-06-0, Asst.0-17np (in Acres 0.15 cents) full land,
Both together making total extent AC 18.63 cents. Lands come under the Panchayat limits of Eluvapalli and Union Council of Hosur. Sd/-

B.Poorna Chandra Reddy,
Address:Flat No.301,
Himagiri Homes, No.131/1A, 18th B Main, Maranahalli, J.P.Nagar 2nd Phase, Bengaluru 560078, Mobile No.9886398350
Date: 13.01.2024 Place: Bangalore

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE
BANGALORE-560 012

IISc/Tender-11/2023-2024 12.01.2024

Tender Notification

Indian Institute of Science invites bids in two cover system through e-procurement platform **https://eprocure.gov.in** from the reputed company/Individual registered as Class I/Class A Civil Contractor with KPWD/CPWD/MES/RAILWAYS/Central PSUs/ or any Government department for the work of **"Construction of Modern Indoor Sports Complex at Gymkhana IISc, Bangalore".** Estimated Cost of Project is **Rs.117,46,07,470.00.** Last date of receipt of application is **01st Feb 2024** at 1530hrs. Any other details can be obtained from the office of the **Centre for Campus Management & Development**, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore on all working days or **e-mail office.ccmd@iisc.ac.in**

Sd/- REGISTRAR

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY G20

Tender Notice No. 45/2023 Dated: 08-01-2024

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders through IREPS only for supply of following items:

Sl.	Tender No	Description in Brief
1	L8236973	Supply of Higher capacity Air Spring Assembly (160 KN) for LHB Coaches having FIAT Bogie. **Spec: RDSO/CG/S/23002 Rev Nil Qty-32 Nos.**
2	L8245057	Up-gradation/Conversion of Fire Detection with Manual Suppression System provided in Power/Pantry cars as per RDSO Specification No. RDSO/2013/CG-06 to Fire Detection System with Automatic Fire Suppression System as per RDSO Specification No. RDSO/2013/CG-06 Rev. 2. **Qty-44 Nos.**

Last date of submission/Tender Due on:**Upto 10:30 Hrs. on 30-01-2024**
For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in

PUB/620/AAD/PRB/SWR/2023-24 **Senior Divisional Materials Manager, Bengaluru**

South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRRLY

SOUTHERN RAILWAY
SALEM DIVISION
E-TENDER NOTICE NO. SA-TRD-2023-24-130 Dated: 10.01.2024

Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer/Traction and Distribution branch/ Salem Division, Salem-5 for and on behalf of the President of India Invites ONLINE tenders for the following works as per tender notice given in our e-tender portal **www.ireps.gov.in.** The Tenderer(s)/Contractor(s) intending to apply for e-tender for works in Salem Division, need to get enrolled in the e-tender portal **www.ireps.gov.in** and only online tender will be accepted. It is the responsibility of Tenderer(s)/Contractor(s) to obtain Digital Signature certificates for participating e-tendering.

Tender No.: SA-TRD-2023-24-130
Name of Work: Electrical TRD arrangements for Salem Division - TTR (FS+ TWS + WCMSC)-13 sets, TTR (TWS + CMSC)-60 sets & TTR (CS+CMSC) - 8 sets.

Appx. value of the work (₹ in lakh)	Cost of Tender form	Amount of EMD (₹)	Completion period of work
29.29	0/-	58600/-	12 months

Tender closing date and time: 06.02.2024 at 15.00 Hrs.
Complete details of the above tenders are given on the e-portal **"www.ireps.gov.in".**
For Details of bid submission, please refer website portal **"www.ireps.gov.in".**
The online bids for tenders floated through the above portal are required to be digitally signed.

Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer, Traction Distribution, Salem.

Follow us on: twitter.com/GMSRailway

RAIL WHEEL FACTORY
Yelahanka, Bengaluru-560 064.
Website: www.rwf.indianrailways.gov.in email: dycmm1rwf@gmail.com, workstendercell@gmail.com

TENDER NOTICE No: RWF/S/146/2023-24/10 Dated: 10.01.2024

On behalf of the President of India, The Principal Chief Materials Manager/RWF invites electronic tender for the following work through the Website http://www.ireps.gov.in from experienced/reputed contractors in the field.

Tender No	RWFSTPT_SR_500-1000Kms	RWFSTPT_FA_ABOVE 1000Kms	RWFSTPT_ SCRAPRAILS_4500MT
Closing Date & Time : 12.02.2024 at 14:45 Hrs.		Scope of work : Refer RWF Website	
Distance slab	Above 500Kms to 1000Kms	Above 1000Kms (with a mean distance of 2500Kms)	Above 1000Kms (with a mean distance of 1600Kms)
Quantity	12000 MT	10500 MT	4500 MT
Estt.Tender Value	Rs.5,79,60,000.00	Rs.5,06,62,500.00	Rs.3,00,96,000.00
EMD Amount	Rs.4,39,800.00	Rs.4,03,300.00	Rs.3,00,500.00
Contract Period	12 (Twelve) months from the date of issue of Letter of Acceptance		

Principal Chief Materials Manager.

KARNATAKA STATE MEDICAL SUPPLIES CORPORATION LIMITED
No.1, Dr. Siddaiah Puranik Road, KHB Colony, Magadi Road, Bengaluru - 560079, Phone: +91-80-29619801
Email: md.ksmscl@gmail.com

No: KSMSCL/DRUGS/TND/AMPK/VIT-C/187/2023-24 Dated: 12.01.2024

TENDER NOTIFICATION

Ref: 1. Tender Notification No: KSMSCL/DRUGS/TND/AMPK/VIT-C/187/2023-24, Dated: 12.01.2024. (IND-0078)
2. Tender Notification No: KSMSCL/DRUGS/TND/AMPK/ 188/2023-24, Dated: 12.01.2024. (IND-0077)

Nationwide Tender is invited through e-Tendering system under KTPP Act 1999 and Rules 2000 for the following tender:

1. **Tender for the supply of Vitamin-C tablets under AMPK Programme under NHM Budget (IND-0078).**
2. **Tender for the supply of Drugs under AMPK Programme under NHM Budget (IND-0077).**

Details regarding EMD, Terms and Conditions and other information are available in the Tender Document, which can be downloaded from the **website https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in from 12.01.2024.** The eligible tenderers shall submit their e-tenders under e-procurement platform for above mentioned tenders. Further information if any may be obtained from this office.

Sd/- Managing Director KSMSCL, Bengaluru.

DIPR/CP/RO/3022/2023-24

KARNATAKA STATE POLICE HOUSING AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LTD.

(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
59, Richmond road, (Gen K.S. Thimmaiah Road)
Bengaluru-25. Ph : 080 - 25584102 / 2559 4893
Website: www.ksphc.org **e mail :** eecontractksphc@gmail.com,

No.EE/KSPH&IDCL/CNT/TND/13/2023 -24/231 Date: 12.01.2024

SHORT TERM NOTICE INVITING TENDER

KSPH & IDCL invites online tender as per KTPP 2000 Act & as per Standard Tender Document through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** for the works of **Construction of Police Quarters under Police Gruha-2025 Phase-IV at various places in Karnataka.**

The Interested Eligible contractors may participate in the tendering process. The details such as Tender Fee, E.M.D, Tender Documents etc., are available on **Karnataka Public Procurement Portal (KPPP)** from **18.01.2024**.

"KSPH & IDCL reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids without assigning any reasons."

Note : Henceforth any changes / modifications in the tender will be updated only on Karnataka Public Procurement Portal (KPPP).

Sd/- Executive Engineer – Contracts

DIPR/CP/RO3023/AAPL/2023-24

Sreenidhi Souharda Sahakari Bank Niyamitha
No. 113, R. V. Road, V. V. Puram, Bangalore-560 004
Phone: 25722152/153 / 26601152/53 / 9482422153
E-mail: sssbn2bmh@sreenidhibank.com

PUBLIC AUCTION SALE NOTICE

Sri.Narendra Babu.N & Smt.Brunda.S.R (Borrowers)

Sale of Immovable Property Mortgaged to Bank Under Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002.

(No 54 of 2002) -- SARFAESI ACT

Whereas Sri. Narendrababu.N S/o Late Nagesh Reddy.H.N and Smt.Brunda.S.R W/o Sri.Narendrababu.N both are residing at No.93, 10th Main, Near APR Kalyana Mantapa, Hongasandra, Bommanahalli, Bangalore-560068 have borrowed monies from Sreenidhi Souharda Sahakari Bank Niyamitha, Bommanahalli Branch, #279, 1st Floor, 16th Cross, 5th Main, 7th Sector, HSR Layout, Bangalore – 560102 and as on 12/01/2024 they owes a sum of Rs.94,01,570.01 (Rupees Ninety Four Lakhs One Thousand Five Hundred Seventy and Paisa Zero One) only with further interest @ 13.50% per annum and costs there on and Rs.19,38,199/- (Rupees Nineteen Lakhs Thirty Eight Thousand One Hundred and Ninety Nine) only with further interest @ 12.50% per annum and costs there on respectively.

Whereas the Authorised Officer of the Bank has issued notice under Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and thereafter has taken possession of the property owned and mortgaged by Sri.Narendrababu.N S/o Late.Nagesh Reddy.H.N mortgaged to the bank and decided to sell the property, described in Schedule "A" herein below, on 'AS IS WHERE IS BASIS' under rules 8 & 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

DETAILS OF SALE:
Place of Auction: Sreenidhi Souharda Sahakari Bank Niyamitha, #113, R.V.Road, V.V. Puram, Bangalore-560004.
Date/Day & time of auction: 14/02/2024 (Wednesday) At 11:00 AM.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHEDULE PROPERTY:

Schedule:- All that piece and parcel of the Property bearing Sy.No.93, Khatha SI.No.560, Situated at Hongasandra Village,10th Main, Near APR kalyanamantapa, Begur Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, Bangalore. Measuring East to West 90 feet and North to South (30 + 25.4)/2 feet totally measuring 2493 Sq.ft.,building consisting of Ground floor, First Floor and second floor, and bounded on East by: Property allotted to kondandarama Reddy and brother's property , West by: Begur Road, North by Jayachandra Reddy's Property and South by: 30 feet Road.

Reserve Price: Rs.1,47,32,958/- (Rupees One Crore Forty Seven Lakhs Thirty Two Thousand Nine Hundred and Fifty Eight) only.

Terms & Conditions of Auction:

1. The above schedule property is proposed for public auction on AS IS WHERE IS BASIS.
2. For participating in the auction, the intending bidders have to deposit 10% of reserve price of the property by Bankers cheque/Demand Draft favouring the Authorised Officer, Sreenidhi Souharda Sahakari Bank Niyamitha, Payable at Bangalore which is refundable, if the bid is not successful.
3. The successful bidder shall deposit 25% of the bid amount immediately on the sale being knocked down in his favour and the balance within 15 days. Payment to be made only in the form of bankers cheque/ DD drawn in favour of the Authorised Officer, Sreenidhi Souharda Sahakari Bank Niyamitha.
4. Incase the successful bidder fails to deposit 25% of bid amount immediately on the sale being knocked down in his favour and the balance amount within 15 days, the entire deposit made by the bidder shall be forfeited by the Authorised Officer without any notice.
5. The successful bidder would bear the charges/fees payable for conveyance such as Stamp duty, Registration fee etc., as applicable as per law.
6. The Authorised officer will not be held responsible for any charge, lien, encumbrance, property tax or any other dues to the Govt. or anybody in respect of the property under sale.
7. The Authorised Officer has the absolute right to accept or reject the bid or adjourn/ postpone the auction without assigning any reason therefore.
8. The sale is subject to confirmation by the Bank.
9. The auction of the property will be made as per the above order or at the discretion of the Authorised Officer.
10. For inspection of property, the intending bidders may contact, Sreenidhi Souharda Sahakari Bank Niyamitha, Bommanahalli Branch, No.279, 1st Floor, 16th Cross, 5th Main, 6th Sector, HSR Layout, Bangalore – 560 102 during the office hours or may contact at telephone **No. 080 25722152/153/9482422153/9902335098.**

Date : 12/01/2024 **Sd/- Authorised Officer**
Place : Bengaluru Sreenidhi Souharda Sahakari Bank Niyamitha

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

I, KAMBARIYA Kanubhai (No.15346740Y NK/DVRMT) Service at Army Digital Mapping Centre, Bangalore, Pin- 900493, C/O 56 APO Hereby declare that My Son's Name has been wrongly mentioned in my Army Records as Kambarya Sukrit & correct Name is Kambariya Sukrit in his birth certificate, I further declare that actual & correct Name is Kambariya Sukrit only, Vide affidavit Dtd: 11-01-2024, Sworn before Notary Y.R. Chandrasekar, Bangalore-32.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Agamjit Kaur W/O, Jagmeet Singh Hanspal R/o R4-710, Alpine Eco Apartment, Doddanekundi Extn, Bangalore - 560037 have changed my name to Agamjeet Kaur.

I, S J Patel, r/at 1450/216, 2nd Cross, Magadi Road, Vidyaranya Nagar, Vijayanagar, Bangalore 560023 have changed my name as Syed Jahangir Ali vide affidavit dtd 09.01.2024 sworn before Notary Deepa M, Bluru

I, MINAA Sunil Kumar, r/at No.116, 10th Mn Road, 6th Sector HSR Layout, B'lore-560102 have changd my name as Minaa Venkatesan vide affidavit dtd 11.01.24 sworn before Notary K.V. Mani, Bluru

I, MANJULA Manjunath Reddy, r/at No.116, 10th Mn Road, 6th Sector HSR layout, B'lore-102, have changed my name as Manjula Gurumurthy Reddy vide affidavit dtd 11.01.24 sworn before Notary K.V. Mani, Bluru

I, SAJJAN KUMARI VIKRAM Kumar Solanki, r/at No.47, Flat No.301, 10th Crs, 3rd Mn, DE Javaregowda Road, Hanumantha Nagar, B'lore-19 have changed my name as Sajjan Vikram Solanki vide affidavit dtd 11.01.24 sworn before Notary K.V. Mani, Bluru

I, VIKRAM Kumar Prakash Chand Solanki, r/at No.47, Flat No.301, 10th Crs, 3rd Mn, DE Javaregowda Road, Hanumantha Nagar, B'lore-19 have changed my name as Vikram Prakash Chand Solanki vide affidavit dtd 11.01.24 sworn before Notary K.V. Mani, Bluru

I, KM NAZMA Ansari, R/at No.46, 2nd Main, 1st Cross, Near A.K. Ashram, Mathadahalli, R T Nagar Post, Bangalore-560032, have changed my name from KM Nazma Ansari to Nazma Ansari vide affidavit dated 11/01/2024 before Notary Y. R. Chandrasekar, Bluru.

WATER PROOFING

BUILDING SOLUTIONS: Waterproofing roof, Tank, Skylight, Bathroom, House painting, Fabrication, Carpentry, Epoxy coating. Macbond. 9448572697

LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE COURT OF THE 2nd ADDL. CIVIL JUDGE & JMFC AT TUMAKURU
ORIGINAL SUIT NO. 31/ 2023

BETWEEN :
ICICI BANK LTD.,
A body corporate incorporated and registered under the Indian Companies Act, 1956 and licensed as a Bank under the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 having Registered Office "Landmark," Race Course Circle, Vadodara- 390 007. and having its Branch Office at ICICI Bank Ltd., ICICI RAPG Division, Classic Arcade, 1st Floor, KS Rao Road, Beside City Centre, Tumkur and represented POA holder and Manager Mr. Sachin Dubey S/o K.K. Dubey, Age: 48 years ...PLAINTIFF

AND :
Mr. Shashikumar. R.
...DEFENDANT

Summons to the defendant by way of paper publication

To,
Defendant:
Mr. Shashikumar. R.
Aged about 38 years,
Son of Rajashekhar,
Residence of 1st Main Road, 4th A cross, Hanumanthapura, Near to Water to Tank, Tumkur- 572 103

Whereas the plaintiff above named has filed a suit under Order VII Rule 1 of the Civil Procedure Code for recovery of **Rs. 2,12,437/- (Rupees Two Lakhs Twelve Thousand Four Hundred and Thirty Seven only)** together with interest at the rate **18% P.A.** from date of due to till the date of realization. You are hereby summoned to appear before this Hon'ble Court, in person or by a pleader on the **26th day of February, 2024** at **11:00 AM** to show cause against the suit, and failing wherein the suit will be heard and determined exparte.

Given under my hand and seal of the court this **09th day of January, 2024.**

By the order of the Court
Siresthedhar,
Prl. Civil Judge and J.M.F.C.
At Tumakuru

Advocates for plaintiff :
S.M. Anees Ahamed,
B.M. Kushalappa,
T.N. Ajay
Advocate,
No. 4, (10/2), West Park Road
Kumara Park East,
Bangalore- 560 001

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13 JANUARY 2024

PR NO-315954 IPRD(23-24) D

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TIME: 12:00
GERMANY
VS
CHILE

TIME: 14:30
JAPAN
VS
CZECH REPUBLIC

TIME: 17:00
NEW ZEALAND
VS
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TIME: 19:30
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VS
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INFORMATION & PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT, JHARKHAND

A BG-BGE

BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE

Office of the Chief Commissioner, Annexe Building-1, N.R. Square, Bangalore-560002

FORM III

No: BBMP/C.Comm/PSR(G)/2705/2023-24 **Date: 09.01.2024**

PUBLIC NOTICE

In exercise of powers conferred under section **14-B of the Karnataka Town and Country Planning Act 1961** the following 'Area' mentioned in the schedule below is required by the Chief Commissioner, Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike for Widening of **Horamavu to Kalkere Road-Outer Ring Road (Banaswadi Bridge) to Dr. Rajkumar Circle (Phase-I)- for implementing the proposals of the Approved Master Plan for the width of 24.00mtrs** for implementing the proposals of the Approved Master Plan-2015 for the width of 24.00mtrs.

The following land / building owners have opted for Development Rights in lieu of monetary compensation under the Right to Fair Compensation and transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013. The Development Rights will be given by the Authority as twice the land area surrendered and two times the building area surrendered and as estimated by the value of the building area surrendered (valuated as per PWD norms) divided by the market value of the land on which the building is constructed.

The public is hereby informed about the details of the land and land owners and interested persons whose lands are required for the public purpose and Development Right Certificate (DRCs) are to be issued in lieu of monetary compensation. Any objections and suggestions are to be addressed to the Special Land Acquisition officer, O/o the Deputy Commissioner (Land Acquisition and TDR) Head Office, BBMP within thirty days from the date of publication of this Notification.

List of land / Building area surrendered and land owners foe which DRC is to be issued.

Name of the District:Bengaluru Urban. Name of the Taluk : Bengaluru East, Name of the Village: Kalkere

Sl. No.	Sy. No. Khatha No.	Type of land		Nature of land			Dimension of the land/ Plot & Extent in Sq.M		Boundaries of the land				Building Details			Present Activity on Land/Building (Specify Specific activity such as Shop, Office, factory, Apartment, Individual House etc.)	Market (guide lines) value of the land per Sq.M	Name and address of the owner of the plot/Land for which DRC is to be issued
		Vacant	Built up	Agriculture	Converted Undeveloped	Approved layout / developed land Building site	Dimension	Extent	North	South	East	West	Extent in Sq.M	Type of Construction and No., of floors	Floor Area Ratio			
1	Sy. No. 507, BBMP Khatha No. 92	Vacant Land			Converted A Khatha Land		1424.00 Sqm		Remaining Portion of Sy. No. 507	Sy. No.80 & Sy. No.506	Sy. No. 509/2	Sy. No. 79/1	None	None	None	Vacant	85000/-	M/s India Financial Association of Seventh Day Adventisis, Rep by Kantharaj G. Secretary, Sunshine Homes and High School of S.D.A. Kalkere Varamavu Post, Sy. No. 507, Kalkere Village, Bangalore - 560 043.

Sd/-
Chief Commissioner, Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike

Karnataka Government (An Autonomous Institution)

KARWAR INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES, KARWAR

No: KRIMS/e-Tender/2023-24 **Date: 11.01.2024**

Tender Notification (through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal)

Sl.No.1: **Tender No: KRIMS/e-Tender/135/2023-24, Date: 11.01.2024, Tender Name:** Re-tender for Supply of TAB under SCP/TSP Scheme at KRIMS Karwar. Tender Commencement **Date: 16.01.2024**, Last date for uploading tender forms: **31.01.2024 before 5.00 pm.**

Sl.No.2: **Tender No: KRIMS/e-Tender/136/2023-24, Date: 11.01.2024, Tender Name:** Re-tender for Supply of U.P.S. to KRIMS Karwar. Tender Commencement **Date: 16.01.2024**, Last date for uploading tender forms: **31.01.2024 before 5.00 pm.**

The details of above e-tender can be obtained from website **http://www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in.**

DIPR/KWR/KSMCA/540/23-24 dt. 11.01.2024 **Sd/- Director**

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED

(CIN : U40109KA1999SGC025521)

No.: KPTCL/HRDC/Civil/B78/35758/2023-24/2301 Date: 12.01.2024

TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through KPPP mode only)

KPTCL invites tender for **"Day to Day Operation & Maintenance of Hostel and other accommodation Rooms including laundry services at Human Resource Development Centre, KPTCL, Hoody, Bengaluru".** Estimated cost: **Rs. 53,90,000/-.** The detailed tender notification regarding the subject can be got by logging on or after **18.01.2024, 4.00 p.m.** to **https://kptcl.karnataka.gov.in** with hyper link 'e procurement KPTCL' or to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

Sd/- Administrator, KPTCL, HRD Centre, Whitefield, Hoody, Bengaluru-560048.

MINORITY WELFARE DEPARTMENT

Directorate of Minorities, #16 C, Moulana Azad Bhavan, Miller Tank Bed Area, Vasantha Nagara, Bengaluru-560052.
Ph No. 080-22535901/02, Help Line No: 8277799990,
Email:**directorgokdom@gmail.com** Website: **https://dom.karnataka.gov.in**

Muslim, Christian, Jain, Buddhist, Sikh, Parsi
ANNOUNCEMENT OF FEE REIMBURSMENT SCHOLARSHIP 2023-24

Online Applications are invited from eligible Minority students of Karnataka State Directorate of Minorities, Minority Welfare department, Karnataka announces "Fees Reimbursement" to those students who are studying in PUC, Diploma, Technical & professional courses Graduates & Post Graduates for the year 2023-24.

For Online application visit the following websites:

The students can apply for Fee Reimbursement by visiting the links given below: **https://ssp. karnataka.gov.in** (State Scholarship Portal) **https://dom.karnataka.gov.in (Directorate of Minorities - GOK)**

Apply Online for Fresh Applications :
Post-Matric Merit-Cum-Means "Fees Reimbursement"
Last Date to apply : : **30.01.2024**

Eligibility Conditions:

1. The student must belong to minority communities (Muslim, Christian, Jain, Buddhist, Sikhs and Parsi)
2. The student must have scored at least 50% marks in the previous year final exam.
3. Total family income should not exceed Rs. 2.00 lakhs for Post-Matric (Fee Reimbursement) & 2.5 lakhs for Merit-Cum-Means (Fee Reimbursement).

For further details, Instructions and procedures please visit Directorate of Minorities website **https://dom.karnataka.gov.in**

For assistance contact nearest Minority Information Centers (MIC) or contact the Minority Welfare Department 24X7 helpline number: 8277799990

NOTE: The current notification is applicable only for "Fee Reimbursement".* The applications shall be considered only under Fee Reimbursement scheme.

Date: 11.01.2024
Place : Bengaluru
Sd/-
Director,
Directorate of Minorities, Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/3036/Zen/2023-24

KARNATAKA INDUSTRIAL AREAS DEVELOPMENT BOARD
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
 # 49, East Wing , 4th & 5th Floor, Khanija Bhavan
Race Course Road, Bengaluru – 560 001.
Phone No. 080-22265383 website : www.kiadb.in,

No. IADB/ENGG/ETND-EP-29/491/2023-24 **Date: 12.01.2024**

NOTICE INVITING TENDER
(Through GOK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Only)

Item rate Tender under two cover bid system is invited for the work mentioned below as per the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act 1999 and Rules 2000 through electronic procurement from eligible Contractors holding valid Class-II & above (Electrical) issued from KCEI, Government of Karnataka who have got adequate financial resources, suitable construction equipments, technical man power & sufficient past experience for the following work of Shifting/Re-routing and releasing of existing DTC's/11KV/LT line passing through the Doddaballapura, Devanahalli General Industrial Area (ITIR) KIADB, Bengaluru Rural District.

The last date and time of receipt of tender is : 29.01.2024 upto 04:30 pm.

Applicants May Download Bidding Documents from the E-Procurement Portal https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.

DIPR/CP/3040/AKAR/2023-24 **Sd/- Chief Engineer-1**

ODISHA CONSTRUCTION CORPORATION LIMITED
(A Govt. of Odisha Undertaking)
UNIT-VIII, BHUBANESWAR
e-mail: theoccltd@odishaconstruction.com ; GSTIN - 21AAACO2571K2ZM

Corrigendum - e-Procurement Notice No. 53 /OCCL/2023-24 (on-line)

Name of Work :- Execution of Micro Irrigation system of Lower Indra Irrigation Project under the Scheme CAD & WM, (Electrical Component).

1. **The amount put to tender may be read as Rs.1086.82 Lakhs in place of Rs.903.96 Lakhs.**
2. **The Bid Security amount may be read as Rs.10.87 Lakhs in place of Rs.9.04 Lakhs.**
3. **The Availability of Tender (on line) & Submission of Tender (on line) may be read as from 16.01.2024 to 30.01.2024 in place of from 13.01.2024 to 29.01.2024.**

Procurement Officer - **Managing Director, OCC Ltd., Bhubaneswar**
Date of opening of the Technical Bid: **31.01.2024, 12.00 Noon.**
Further detail can be seen from the Govt. website (**www.tendersodisha.gov.in**)

Managing Director

CAD-3689 OIPR-34120/11/0068/2324

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is brought to the notice of General Public that our Clients are intending to purchase immovable property bearing No.8/1,(earlier Northern half Portion of Premises No. 1-A), PID No.75-11-81, situated at G.No.8th Street I Cross, Jogu palyam, Ulsoor, Bglore-08, Measuring East: 22 ft 9 inches, West: 22 ft 9 Inches, North: 33 ft and South: 33 feet, in all measuring 755.7sq ft, plus passage of 39 sq ft and bounded on the **East By** :G.No.8th Street, **West By**:Private Property, **North by:** P.S. Shanthas Property, and passage mentioned below and **South by:** Private Property. from its owner. Any person/s having objections to the said transactions can register their claim/s with documentary evidence with the undersigned within 15 days of publication hereof, failing which, our clients will proceed with the transactions and any claim/s received thereafter will not be entertained.

H.V.NAVEEN KUMAR RAO & H.V.SUNIL KUMAR RAO
ADVOCATES
No. 57, 1st Floor,Veerapillai Street, Bengaluru-01. Mob: 9341380225

Startup Odisha

(2nd Floor, Tower-A, Odisha Startup Incubation Centre (O-Hub), Special Economic Zone , Infocity, Patia, Bhubaneswar-751024)

Ref.No: SO/IV/2023-24/235/2801 **Date: 10.01.2024**

Request for Expression of Interest for Installation of Multi- Service Network Enhancers for Mobile and Telecommunications

Startup Odisha invites sealed proposals from eligible firms / organizations / bidders to provide the desired services to Startup Odisha. Bidders fulfilling the prescribed eligibility criteria of the RFEOI can access and download the complete RFEOI Document and other details from the website **www.startupodisha.gov.in**. The last date of receipt of proposals is **07/02/2024 by 05:30 PM**. Interested bidders are further advised to keep referring to Startup Odisha website for any updates or corrigendum in reference to this advertisement. Startup Odisha reserves all rights to reject any or all proposals without assigning any reason thereof.

Sd/-
Chief Administrative Officer

h-32 : OIPR - 43007/11/0040/2324

BANGALORE MYSORE INFRASTRUCTURE CORRIDOR AREA PLANNING AUTHORITY
No.5, 2nd Floor, Looplane, Race Course Road, Bengaluru - 560009.
Phone: 080-22341230/35 E-mail: bmicapa@gmail.com

No: BMICAPA/CLU-01/36/2021-22/1541 **Date: 11.01.2024**

PUBLICATION
(UNDER SEC 14(A) OF KTCP ACT, 1961)

Smt. S.Vimala W/o Late M.Prabhakar has applied to this Authority seeking Change of land use from **"Residential"** Zone to **"Commercial"** Zone which land is reserved for Residential purpose in approved Master plan under Sec 14(A) of KTCP Act 1961, pertaining to Sy.No: 60/9 Extent of 0Acre-29½ Guntas of Konappana Agrahara Village, Begur Hobli, Bengaluru South Taluk. Applicant has stated that the change of land use sought is in the interest of public by quoting the following;

1) By developing the Commercial Projects in the above said land, the poor and middle class people will get jobs and Trade / Business transaction.
2) During the development works of the layout there will be opportunity of employment for labourers.
3) Surrounding areas will be developed the Commercial complexes in the above said land.
4) By Developing the Commercial areas in the said land Government will get Tax.

Objections, if any, are invited from the public, any person may file his/her objection to Member Secretary, BMICAPA, Bengaluru in writing to the above address mentioned in this publication within 15 days from this notice. Any objection received there after will not be considered.

Sd/-
Member Secretary,
BMICAPA, Bangalore.

DIPR/CP/3010/SPAN/2023-24

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA - DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER & BASIN MANAGER, BRAHMANI BASIN, SAMAL
e-Mail : cebmbbs@gmail.com

Bid Identification No. BBS-HID-UGPL 03 of 2023-24 (e-procurement No-CEBBS-HID-03/2023-24)

No. 198(A) / NOTICE INVITING TENDER **Dated : 10.01.24**

The Chief Engineer & Basin Manager, Brahmani Basin, Samal on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites online EPC Contract in double cover system through e-procurement for the work mentioned below:

Name of Work	Class/EMD/Tender Fee/Period of Completion
Construction of Under Ground Pipeline System of Hadua Irrigation Project, Narasinghpur in District of Cuttack, Odisha including its distribution network, up to 1 Ha Chak with Outlet management System having total planned Culturable Command Area of 3641 Ha to supply irrigation water from Hadua Dam with provision for booster pump on EPC mode of contract (Turn Key Basis) including power connectivity, Electro-Mechanical components, PIM and operation & maintenance of complete commissioned system for 5 years.	1) Class - 'Super' class or equivalent class of Bidders. (2) EMD - Rs.1,64,41,000/- (3) The approximate value of work put to tender is Rs.164.41 crores (excluding GST) (4) Tender Fee-Rs.10,000/- to be transferred online (Non-Refundable) by Online mode. (5) Period of Completion - 30 (Thirty) calendar months including rainy season
A. Period of completion	30 (Thirty) calendar months
B. Date & Time of Availability of Bid Document in the Portal	Dt. 16.01.2024 from 10.00 AM to Dt.15.02.2024 upto 5.00 PM
C. Period of Sale of Bidding Document	31 days
D. Time and Date for Pre-Bid Conference	Dt. 25.01.2024 at 11.00 AM Office of the CE & BM, Brahmani Basin, Samal. (Virtual Mode, the link will be shared through E-mail).
E. Last Date and Time for Receipt of Bids	Dt. 15.02.2024 upto 5.00 PM
F. Place of Sale, Receipt of Bids	On-Line Through e-Procurement.
G. Time and Date of Opening of Technical Bid	Dt. 16.02.2024 at 11.00 AM (If the opening date happens to be holiday or declared holiday, opening will be done in the next working day)
H. Place of Opening of Bids	Office of the CE & BM, Brahmani Basin, Samal, 759037.
I. Further details can be seen from e-procurement portal https://tendersodisha.gov.in	

A-1193 : **Chief Engineer & Basin Manager, Brahmani Basin, Samal.**

OIPR-32480/11/0005/2324

KARNATAKA STATE OPEN UNIVERSITY (KSOU)
Mukthagangothri, Mysuru - 570006.

No: KSOU/Dean (AC) /DAC-07/Ph.D./2023-24 **Date: 12.01.2024**

NOTIFICATION

January Cycle Admission to Ph.D. Programmes 2023-24 (Regular Mode)

Ref: (1) UGC Public Notice F: No.2-1/2017(DEB-III) dated 14.09.2018. **(2)** KSOU Degree of Doctor of Philosophy Ordinance 2012 (4th Amendment 2023) **(3)** Approval of Hon'ble Vice Chancellor dated: 12.01.2024.

Applications are invited in the prescribed format from eligible candidates for admission to the Ph.D. Programmes in the following Departments of Studies and Research.

• Kannada • English • Telugu • Information Technology • Economics • Political Science • Sociology • Journalism and Mass Communication • Commerce • Environmental Science • Psychology • Computer Science • Geography • Food Science and Nutrition.

Common Entrance Test (CET) • Eligible Candidates shall appear for Common Entrance Test (CET) • Candidates who have qualified **UGC/UGC-CSIR, JRF Test / NET / GATE / GRE / M.Phil** shall be exempted from appearing to CET; however they shall appear for Interview / Viva Voce.

Centre for Common Entrance Test (CET): KSOU Campus Mysore only.

Payment of Fee: Download application available in KSOU website along with online payment of Rs 2000/- (Rs 1000 for SC/ST/Cat-1) towards application processing fee through KSOU admission portal. Duly filled application should be submitted along with the attested documents either in person or by post to:

Applications of the Candidates for Languages, Social Science and Science Department should be sent to the following address :

The Chairperson, Department of Studies and Research in…….. Mukthagangothri, Mysuru - 570 006.

Applications of the Commerce Department Candidates should be sent to the following address :

The Chairperson, Department of Studies and Research in Commerce, KSOU Commerce and Management Block, 18th Main Road, Vijayanagara 3rd Stage, 'B' Block, Mysuru - 570 030.

IMPORTANT DATES

Details	Date
Ph.D. Application available in the website	12.01.2024
Last date for submitting Application without penal fee	07.02.2024
Last date for submitting Application with penal fee of Rs.500/-	14.02.2024
Common Entrance Test	03.03.2024
CET Results Declaration	11.03.2024
Announcement of selection list	30.03.2024
Counselling for Supervisor Allotment	10.04.2024

Visit KSOU official website **www.ksoumysuru.ac.in** for more details including Ph.D. Prospectus, Application, Fee Structure, Seat Matrix, Syllabus, Question Paper Pattern, Eligibility, details of CET and other information.

Sd/- Registrar

ರಾಯಚೂರು ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯ RAICHUR UNIVERSITY

ಯರಗೇರಾ–584 133, ರಾಯಚೂರು, ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ, ಭಾರತ
Email:- registrarrur@gmail.com, +918532200972
https://raichuruniversity.ac.in

Sl No: RUR/ADM/T12/2023-24/1351 Date:11.01.2024

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through E-Procurement System only)

Short term tender is invited from the reputed Companies/Agencies to "Scientific Equipment, Lab Chemicals, Glassware's, Museum specimens and other items for the Science Laboratories of the different Departments of the Raichur University Yeragera - 584133."The last date for submission of online tender is Date:29/01/2024, 05PM. Tender form, fees, and EMD are as per e-portal only. For more details, download the information from the website: https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in

Note: If any changes (Corrigendum/ addendum) in the tender, will be published in e-tender portal only.

Sd/- Registrar Raichur University, Raichur

DIP/RCR/395/KSMC&A/Job No.392/2023-24

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA

Karnataka Government Secretariat

Finance Department
Vidhana Soudha, Bengaluru.

No. FD 02 BMB 2023 **Date: 12.01.2024**

PRESS COMMUNIQUE

It is notified for general information that the outstanding balance of **9.55% Karnataka SDL 2024** issued in terms of the Government of **Karnataka**, Finance Department Notification No. **FD 02 BMB 2013 dated February 07, 2014** will be repaid at par on **February 12, 2024** with interest due up to and including **February 11, 2024** In the event of a holiday being declared on the aforesaid date by any State Government under the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, the loan will be repaid by the paying offices in that State on the previous working day. **No interest will accrue on the loan from and after February 12, 2024**

2. As per sub-regulation 24 (2) and 24 (3) of Government Securities Regulations, 2007 payment of maturity proceeds to the registered holder of Government Security held in the form of Subsidiary General Ledger or Constituent Subsidiary General Ledger account or Stock Certificate shall be made by a pay order incorporating the relevant particulars of his bank account or by credit to the account of the holder in any bank having facility of receipt of funds through electronic means. For the purpose of making payment in respect of the securities, the original subscriber or the subsequent holders of such a Government Securities, as the case may be, shall submit to the Bank or Treasury and Sub- Treasury or branch of State Bank of India, where they are enfaced / registered for payment of interest, as the case may be, the relevant particulars of their bank account.

3. However, in the absence of relevant particulars of bank account / mandate for receipt of funds through electronic means, to facilitate repayment on the due date, holders of **9.55% Karnataka SDL 2024** should tender their securities at the Public Debt Office, 20 days in advance. The securities should be tendered for repayment, duly discharged on the reverse there of as under:

"Received the Principal due on the Certificate"

4. It should be particularly noted that at places where the treasury work is done by a branch of the State Bank of India, the securities, if they are in the form of Stock Certificates, should be tendered at the branch of the bank concerned and not at the Treasury or Sub-Treasury.

5. Holders who wish to receive payment at places other than those where the securities have been enfaced for payment should send them duly discharged to the Public Debt Office concerned by Registered and Insured Post. The Public Debt Office will make payment by issuing a draft payable at any Treasury / Sub-Treasury or branch of State Bank of India conducting Government Treasury work in the State of **Karnataka.**

Sd/- (Dr. P. C. Jaffer), Secretary to Government (Budget & Resources), Finance Department

DIPR/CP/RO3016/AAPL/2023-24

Shivamogga City Corporation, Shivamogga

No: ಶಿಮನಪಾಶಿ:ಆವಿ:ಸಿಆರ್:124/2023-24 **Date: :10.01.2024**

Short-term Tender Notification (Through Karnataka Public Procurement portal)

Tenders have been invited in Two-cover system through Karnataka Public Procurement as per Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Rules 1999-2000 and Act 2000 and as per standard tender document procedure to procure the following services in the limits of Shivamogga City Corporation. The suppliers who are interested in participating through Karnataka Public procurement tender can obtain the details in website https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.

(1) Date of commencement of tender through Karnataka Public Procurement : **From 11.01.2024**. (2) Last date for submission of tender through KP procurement portal : **20.01.2024 for Sl. No. 1 works and 29.01.2024 for Sl. No. 2 works.** (3) Date of opening of tender through K P procurement: **As per KPP portal. (**4) More details can be had from KPP portal and other details from this office during office hours.

Sl. No.	Details	Approx. amount (Rs in lakhs)	EMD amount (In Rs)	Grants
1	Providing Vehicle Along With Driver on hire basis For health section, Shivamogga city corporation Shivamogga (03 Numbers of Non A/C Cars) Indent No : DMA/2023-24/SE1623/CALL-02	15.00	37,500/-	Corporation's General Fund for the year 2023-24.
2	Supply of morning breakfast with one egg to Pourakarmikas and cleaning employees (Drivers, Loaders, Driver cum operators and Helpers) daily working in Shivamogga City Corporation for a period of 12 months. Indet No : DMA/2023-24/SE0608/CALL-05	102.20	1,53,300/-	Corporation's General Fund for the year 2023-24.

Note: Any changes or corrigendum will be notified in K P Procurement portal only.

Sd/- Executive Engineer (Div 1)
Shivamogga City Corporation, Shivamogga.

DIPR/SMG/No.49-01/zenkar/2023-24

EDUCATION

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

Nature in the classroom

How sustainable architecture can be a tool to facilitate holistic educational environments

Aman Aggarwal

The National Education Policy, with its last update in the post-pandemic period, lays emphasis on the importance of cognitive, emotional, social and physical development in schools and in the communities where students interact. At the curriculum level, this shift in philosophy offers freedom of choice through the diverse range of subjects beyond the conventional streams. A highly conducive learning environment that accommodates these values right from their operational levels becomes essential in the development process.

Nurturing the young

Effectively, the infrastructure and spatial planning of the learning institutions become immediate environments that can help foster these reforms. A multidisciplinary approach to education is a system that facilitates real-world learning beyond its academic roots and ensures holistic progress. An educational campus equipped with spaces for students to interact in becomes essential as the spaces we inhabit contribute greatly to moulding our behavioural tendencies. Which, in the case of younger minds, is only more impacting. Schools and places of education are one of the primary interactions of children with our society and environment due to the amount of time they spend in these spaces.

Architects and designers must be aware of the impact that the spaces they build have on youngsters' well-being and growth. The space of learning must not be an overwhelming set of vast, daunting structures. Instead, inviting spaces must be generated by scaling down the built proportions.

In the pandemic-recovered world, it is abundantly clear that students learn from their environment rather than merely through blackboard lessons. The school can therefore become a thriving and thermally comfortable environment with a lot of green cover surrounding the spaces of learning.

Bright interiors

The finer and often overlooked factors like lighting, shadows, colours and textures hold as much importance as the overarching design principles. For instance, studies have proven that incorporating bright colours in the kids' immediate learning environment helps stimulate their mental development. Exposure to variations in patterns of light and shadows helps with the same. One of the learnings to come out of this is that children are quite receptive to different textures, and designers could use this as their starting point. One of these ways could be playing around with surfaces and textures, like that of a mud floor instead of the conventional cement or tile flooring.

Today, we are required to be more conscious of creating a strong homogeneous relationship between the school classrooms and the outdoors. This idea was liberally explored in schools we designed in some of Haryana's most underdeveloped, remote villages.

Successful models

Treading on similar ideals is a school in the dense semi-urban fabric of the Mandi Gobindgarh district in Punjab. The entire built mass was broken down into several smaller cuboidal units. Breaking a large, monolithic block into smaller modules rendered the space cheerful and inviting. The modules then came together to form a dynamic grid wherein each independent block opened onto green spaces or courtyards on almost all sides. The matrix of these rotated blocks with strategic openings spilled out to form a network of green areas, thereby generating more avenues for interaction. These zones also allow students to create incidental points of gathering, critical for the student experience.

Additionally, schools must incorporate micro-environments, which are thriving environments with plenty of greens. They are made thermally comfortable with the incorporation of passive cooling techniques like the stack effect that ensures circulation of air.

Freedom to explore

The entire school must be a secure environment where children are empowered with the freedom to explore, learn, and play without inhibition. Child-friendly spaces can step away from the established norms of educational infrastructure – enclosed chambers or spaces labelled as safe where the child is confined to one desk and a chair throughout the day.

Factoring in these notions, the impact of architecture becomes crucial in the developmental stages of a child's life, and we, as designers, are responsible for encouraging their growth and enabling them to create sustainable futures. Pedagogy alone is not the defining standard that shapes these young thinkers. Their immediate environments and nature contribute equally if not more to create safe and fruitful spaces for children's early developmental years. In the best of worlds, the ideal classroom is the one without walls and under a tree!

The writer is Principal Architect, Charged Voids.

REAL ESTATE

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THE HINDU
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BG-BGE

INBRIEF

Govt. likely to allow one-time entry for 11,700 staff to OPS

The State government is likely to allow a one-time option to about 11,700 employees, who are currently under National Pension Scheme (NPS), to return to the Old Pension Scheme (OPS). A meeting in this regard was held here recently chaired by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah. The issue was pending for decision in the Finance Department for the last six months. On the occasion, employees under NPS also made a presentation about withdrawal from NPS by citing examples of five States that have withdrawn from NPS, said Shantharam, president of Karnataka State Government NPS Employees' Association. These 11,700 employees were appointed to the vacancies or posts advertised prior to December 22, 2003, but came to be covered under NPS on joining the service on or after January 1, 2004.

Satyavathi G. is Secretary of Backward Classes Welfare Dept.

The State government on Friday appointed former BMTC Managing Director, Satyavathi G, as Secretary to Government, Backward Classes Welfare Department, Bengaluru. The State government also gave concurrent charge of the post of MD, Karnataka State Finance Corporation to Reju M.T., while Shilpa Sharma has been given the concurrent charge of the post of Controller of Examinations, Karnataka Public Service Commission, Bengaluru. The government also transferred nine IAS officers and gave them new postings: Thulasi Maddineni - Secretary to Government, Animal Husbandry, Veterinary Sciences and Fisheries Department; Salma K. Fahim - Secretary to Government, Tourism Department; Ujjawal Kumar Ghosh - Secretary to Government, DPAR (e-Governance); Bhoyar Harshal Narayanrao - Director, Atal Jana Snehi Kendra; Sangappa - Executive Director, Suvarna Arogya Suraksha Trust; and Prasanna H., Executive Director, KEA.

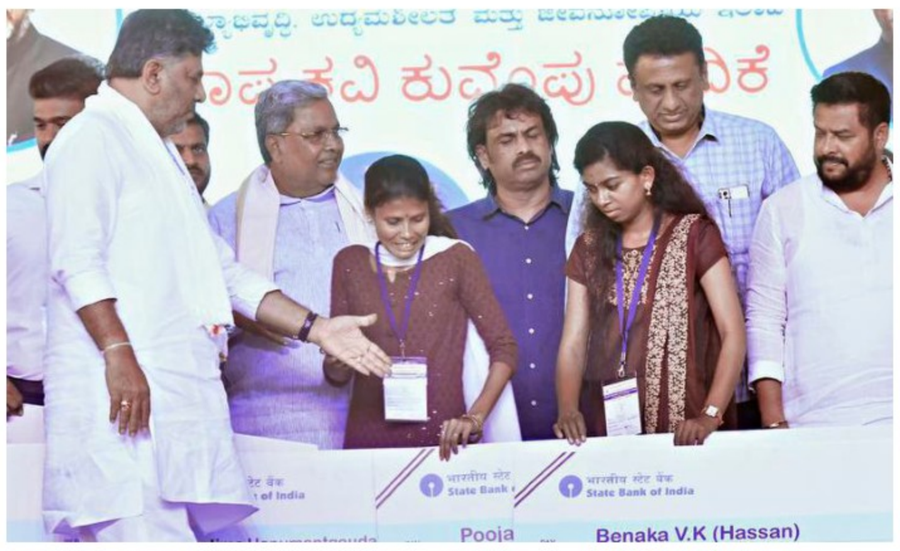
1.5 cr. families get ₹5,000 to ₹6,000 a month under our schemes, says CM

Fifth and final poll guarantee of Congress govt., Yuva Nidhi, launched by Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar in Shivamogga

The Hindu Bureau
SHIVAMOGGA

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Friday launched the Yuva Nidhi scheme, the fifth and final poll guarantee of the Congress government which provides financial assistance for educated unemployed youth of the State. He said the idea behind the five schemes were premised on the concept of universal basic income, prevailing in European countries.

Every month, the Chief Minister said, around 1.5 crore families in the State get ₹5,000 to ₹6,000 under the five guarantee schemes. "In European countries, this amount is referred to as universal basic income. We have implemented a similar principle here," he said, launching the scheme with Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar in Shivamogga.



Chief Minister Siddaramaiah at the launch of Yuva Nidhi scheme in Shivamogga on Friday.

High unemployment

The rate of unemployment has grown at an alarming rate since 2014, he said. "The unemployment rate was 5.5% in 2014. Now it stands at 10.5%. Hence, we have come up with Yuva Nidhi to help the youth. The scheme offers financial assistance, besides training programmes to develop skills and seek jobs. We will also hold job fairs so that youths get jobs in India and abroad," Mr. Siddaramaiah said. Mr. Siddaramaiah said that after his government came to power on May 20, five guarantees - Stree Shakti, Gruha Jyothi, Gruha Lakshmi, and Annabhagya - were benefiting lakhs of families. "Since implementation of Shakti scheme on June 11, women have used the benefit during over 130 crore travels," he said.

The Yuva Nidhi scheme offers financial aid to graduates and diploma holders, who are yet to get a job, for a maximum of two years. Training will be provided to the graduates and diploma holders who register themselves on the skill connect portal of the State government. The government has promised ₹3,000 per month to degree holders and ₹1,500 per month to diploma holders who were unable to get a job in the past six months and are not pursuing higher studies. The aid will be paid for two years.

The launch was held on the birth anniversary of youth icon Swami Vivekananda. Organisers had made arrangements for close to one lakh people to witness the launch. More than one lakh beneficiaries from Shivamogga, Davangere, Chitradurga, Chikkamagaluru, Udupi, and Haveri districts attended the event.

Minister for Medical Education and Skill Development Sharan Prakash Patil, whose department is implementing Yuva Nidhi, said applications can be submitted at Karnataka One, Grama One, Bapuji Seva Kendra, or Seva Sindhu portals. An applicant must possess Aadhaar card, bank passbook, ration card, mark sheets of SSLC, PU, degree or diploma.

Will visit Ayodhya after Jan. 22: CM

The Hindu Bureau
SHIVAMOGGA

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has said that he will visit the Ram temple in Ayodhya after January 22.

"I will visit the temple in Ayodhya whenever I am free after the January 22 event," he told mediapersons in Shivamogga. "We are also devotees of Sri Rama, but do not use his name for political gains. We are opposing the politics being done by the BJP in the name of Ram," he added.

The Chief Minister said that Congress workers will visit temples across Karnataka on January 22, and offer prayers. When asked about some demanding more posts of Deputy Chief Ministers, Mr. Siddaramaiah said he would not want to discuss the issue.

KSRTC buses hired to ferry students and party workers

The Hindu Bureau
SHIVAMOGGA

The State government hired nearly 1,000 buses to carry students and party workers for the launch of Yuva Nidhi, the scheme that offers financial assistance to unemployed graduates and diploma holders, to Shivamogga on Friday.

The expenditure incurred for ferrying students and and people alone is expected to cross ₹1.7 crore. KSRTC charges ₹47 per km. And, the corporation collects charges for minimum 350 km per day. Many buses were hired from Tumakuru, Chikkamagaluru, Chitradurga, and Davanagere divisions of KSRTC to help students and people in Shivamogga district to reach the programme venue.

Compulsory attendance

All degree and diploma colleges were instructed to ensure their students take part in the event. In Shivamogga, the Director of Shivamogga Institute of Medical Sciences issued a circular instructing students of first and second year of MBBS attend the programme without fail. The director also warned them of "strict action" on failing to attend the event.

'Ascertain age of accused in criminal cases to ensure they are not minors'

FROM THE COURT

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The High Court of Karnataka has directed the judges of all trial courts, including special courts, to ensure that the accused produced in criminal cases are not minors.

The judges of the trial court should direct the investigating officers or the accused to produce documentary proof for the age whenever the accused persons, especially in the age of 18 to 22, are produced before them, the High Court said.

Justice C.M. Joshi issued the directions while noticing that a Bidar-based minor boy, 16 years and two months of age, who was produced before a special court for Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act offences, had spent three years and three months in a regular prison on the charges of allegedly raping a minor girl instead of being proceeded before a Juvenile Justice Board.

Referring to guidelines issued by the apex court, the High Court said that the trial courts, at the time of first production of the accused, should make an oral enquiry about the age, apart from about ill-treatment by the police, intimation given to the family members of the accused, reasons for the arrest, place of arrest, and ailments, if any, and to be recorded in the remand order.

Appeal by accused

The High Court was dealing with an appeal filed by the accused, now aged around 20, questioning the Bidar trial court's order of convicting him on the charges of raping a minor girl in 2019 and sentencing him to 20 years' imprisonment.

While setting aside his conviction and sentence, the High Court found that his age was determined, in terms of the guidelines issued by the apex court, during the pendency of trial of the case.

Victim turns hostile

While pointing out that criminal proceedings could not have been conducted against him before the regular court, the High Court pointed also pointed out that that no sufficient evidence is against him as many witnesses, including the victim, had turned hostile.

Noticing that the trial court had convicted him purely based on scientific evidence, the High Court said that collection of samples for DNA test was not carried out properly by the police and the statements of the doctors, who conducted medical tests, were also not recorded before the trial court.

The High Court also noted that he was in judicial custody for three years and three months even though the maximum detention period in special homes under the Juvenile Justice Act is three years for juvenile offenders.

'Ministers who fail to ensure victory in LS polls will lose post'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

All India Congress Committee is closely watching the discharge of responsibilities by all 28 Ministers who have been appointed as coordinators for Parliamentary constituencies in Karnataka and those who fail to ensure the party's victory will lose their posts, said Home Minister G. Parameshwara.

Mr. Parameshwara, who attended a brainstorming session of coordinators in Delhi on Thursday, told reporters here on Friday that the party high command has warned the Ministers that they have to deliver to the party in Parliament elections.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah is likely to reshuffle his ministry after the 2024 Lok Sabha election results, it is learnt. "We have been told to take up the responsibility seriously and execute the campaign strategy without failure," he said. "Warning of sacking from posts has also been given. The high command had clearly mentioned that if the party gets defeated in seats where it can win easily, it will be assumed that the work is not done," he added.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISRTY OF DEFENCE
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1. ECHS invites the applications to engage following Medical, Para Medicals & ; Non Medical Staff on contractual basis in ECHS Polyclinics **Yelahanka, Kolar** and for a period of one year(+next FY ending Mar 31 for ESMs) and 11 Months for the civil candidates.

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03	Dental Officer	BDS	0	01	75,000/-
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06	Nursing Assistant	GNM Diploma/Class-I Nursing Assistant Course Course (Armed Course)	0	01	28,100/-
07	Clerk	Graduate, Class I Clerical Trade (Armed Forces)	0	01	16,800/-
08	Driver	Education-8 th Std/ Class1 MT Driver (Armed Forces)	01	01	19,700/-
09	Female Attendant	Literate	0	01	16,800/-
10	Peon	Education-8 th Std GD (Trade Armed forces)	01	0	16,800/-
		Total	05	08	

2. For 'Terms & Conditions', Application Form, and Remuneration kindly see our website www.echs.gov.in. for additional details please contact Stn HQ (ECHS Cell) Yelahanka Tele NO: 080/28478088 and e-mail echsyel@gmail.com also approach concerned ECHS Polyclinic for details. Preference will be given to Ex- Servicemen.
3. Last date of receipt of application as per format given at our website. Application as per requisite format along with self attested photocopies of testimonials in support of Educational Qualifications and work experience will be submitted to OIC, Stn HQ(ECHS Cell) Yelahanka by **27th Jan 2024** in duplicate, Any applications received after **27th Jan 2024** will not be accepted.
4. Interview Date, Timing & Venue : Candidate must reach Stn HQ ECHS Yelahanka at AF Stn Yelahanka on **29th Jan 2024** will be **(OIC, MO & DO)**, on **30th Jan 2024** will be **(Para & Non Medical Staff)** for the interview to be held between 1000 hrs hrs to 1400hrs. Candidate must bring all the original certificate/mark sheets/10 th /Matric.10+2& Graduation/PG/Diploma/course, work experience and discharge book, PPO, service. records and 02 PP size photographs at the time of interview. No TA/DA is admissible. Only candidate meeting the Qualification Requirements may apply.

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER,
PUBLIC WORKS DEPT. DIVISION, GADAG.
Phone No: 08372-238782 Fax No. 08372-237268 E.Mail: eepwdgad@gmail.com
No: EEPWDGDG PB- 1 :Different Head : 2023-24 4378 Dated:- 12-1-2024
Office of the Executive Engineer PWD Division, Gadag.

Tender Notification

The Executive Engineer, Public works department. Division,Gadag invites itemwise tenders from eligible tenderers of 18 work of total amount of Rs -189.40 Lakh (Min estimate amount: Rs. 03.00 Lakhs to Max Estimate Amount: 88.40 Lakhs) for the Different Head of account on behalf of the Hon'able Governor of Karnataka as per Standard Bid Document KW- 1 & 3 through http:// www. kppp. Karnataka. gov.in/
(a)Last Date for Clarification upto :23-01-2024, (b) Last Date for Receipt of Tenders :- 29-01-2024 (c) Opening of Technical Bid Date:- 30-01-2024 (d) Opening of Financial Bid Date:-31-01-2024
Work Indent No:- 7501 Call-3, 7500 Call-2, 7499-SC Call-2, 7498 Call-3, 7497 Call-2, 7496 Call-2, 7495 Call-2, 7494 Call-2, 7492 Call-2, 7490- Call-3, 7489- Call-3, 7488 Call-2, 7487 Call-3, 7295 Call-2, 7293-SC Call-2, 7292 Call-2, 7290 Call-2, 7287- Call-3 & 6392
The tenderers are advised to note the minimum qualification criteria specified in clause 3 of the instructions to tenderers to qualify for award of the contract. For further information contact the office of The Executive Engineer, PWD Division Gadag (08372-238782) during office hours.
GST shall be paid separately as per prevailing Government Order. The increase in GST shall not be paid in the extended period of contract for which the contractor alone is responsible for delay as determined by the authority while granting the extension of time.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
P.W.D .Division, Gadag.
DIPR/Gadag/461/DeshpandePublicity/2023-24

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E-mail : dgmp2.cz@mp.gov.in, Website : portal.mpcz.in, CIN Number : U40109MP2002SGC015119
No. MD/MK/04/Abgd.NIT/3791 Bhopal, Dated : 12.01.2024

TENDER NOTICE

MPMKVVCL, Bhopal, invites following bids from Manufacturers/Suppliers/Authorized Dealers/Authorized Fabricators only through e-tendering.

Tender Specification Number	Particulars	Approx. Value (Rs. Lakh)	Tender Fee including GST @18% (in Rs.)	Date of Opening of tender
MD/MK/ 04/1013	Supply of Electrical Items for Special Type 11/0.4 KV Distribution Transformers under RCA.	1070.24	11800.00	30.01.2024 3:30 pm
MD/MK/ 04/1014	Manufacturing and Supply of Housing Box for Special Type Transformer under RCA.	94.78	11800.00	30.01.2024 3:30 pm

Other details are available on Company website **https://portal.mpcz.in** & "**https://mptenders.gov.in**"
M.P. Madhyam/113269/2024 **CHIEF GENERAL MANAGER (PROC.)**

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF,
RURAL WORKS, ODISHA, BHUBANESWAR
Letter No. , Dated : 05.01.2024 Email i.d. : crew_bbsr@yahoo.com
Notice inviting request for proposal from consultant
(RFP-Online-CE(Buildings & Bridges)-09 / 2023-24 dt.04.01.2024)

1. Name of the work : **As mentioned in NIT**
2. Total No. of Works : **04 (Four) no**
3. Period of Completion : **30 Calendar Months**
4. Other details : **www.tendersodisha.gov.in**

Procurement Office	Bid Identification No.	No. of bridge works	Availability of Tender on-line for bidding From	To
Chief Engineer, Buildings & Bridges, Rural Works, Odisha, Bhubaneswar	RFP-Online-CE-Buildings & Bridges-09 (Bridge) / 2023-24	04 (Four) Nos.	16.01.2024 at 10.00 A.M	31.01.2024 Upto 5.00 P.M

Other details can be seen in the bidding documents, which will be available in website **www.tendersorissa.gov.in** .
O-2196 : **Chief Engineer (Buildings & Bridges), Rural Works, Odisha, Bhubaneswar**
OIPR-25123/11/0043/2324

BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE
Office of the Executive Engineer,
Project Division, Yelahanka Zone, Bengaluru - 560092.
No: BBMP/YNK/EE (P)/TEND/09/2023-24 Date: 11-01-2024

NOTICE INVITING TENDER (NIT)
(Through GOK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal only)

The Executive Engineer (Project Division), Yelahanka Zone, BBMP invites tenders from eligible Outsourcing Firms / Agencies registered in any State Government Organizations for Outsourcing Manpower Service as detailed below.

Sl. No.	Name of the Projects	Amount Put to Tender (Rs. in Lakhs)	EMD (Rs. in Lakhs)
1	Providing Data Entry Operators / Computer Operators for Offices at Yelahanka Zone, BBMP.	132.86	2.00

Calendar of Events: 1) The tender documents may be downloaded from the GOK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Website: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in. 2)** Last Date and Time for Queries (through Online only): **25-01-2024 upto 3.00 PM. 3)** Last Date and Time for Receipt of Tenders: **30-01-2024 upto 4.00 PM. 4)** Opening of Technical Bid on **31-01-2024 at 4.30 PM (if possible or next working day). 5)** Opening of Financial Bid on **02-02-2024 at 4.00 PM (if possible).** Further details can be had from the above office.

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
Project Division, Yelahanka Zone, BBMP.

KSE asks BJP Central leaders to resolve issues related to Yatnal and Somanna

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

BJP leader and former Minister K.S. Eshwarappa, who met party's key strategist and Union Home Minister Amit Shah in New Delhi on Thursday, is learnt to have made several suggestions to strengthen the party organisation ahead of the Lok Sabha elections, including the need to amicably resolve the issues related to senior leaders Basanagouda Patil R. Yatnal and V. Somanna.

While Mr. Eshwarappa has desisted from making any comments on his meeting with the party's Central leaders, sources said he suggested that resolving the issues would go a long way in strengthening the party organisation.

SC issues summons to Centre on Kerala's suit alleging financial curbs

State says it is unable to borrow funds or take loans owing to Centre's 'arbitrary' restrictions, and seeks interim relief so that it can borrow ₹26,226 crore to clear 'unmet arrears and immediate obligations'; court to look into issue on January 25

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday agreed to examine an original suit filed by Kerala alleging that the Centre was violating the federal structure of governance and causing "severe damage to the economy of a small State with meagre resources" by interfering with the finances of the State.

A Bench headed Justice Surya Kant issued summons to the Union of India through the Attorney-General. It listed Kerala's application for interim reliefs, which include an injunction to restrain the Centre from curtailing the State from borrowing ₹26,226 crore to clear "unmet arrears and immediate obligations", on January 25.

> State is apprehensive that its treasury operations will be halted or starkly curtailed.. the consequences will be catastrophic
>
> **KERALA'S SUIT IN SUPREME COURT**

The original suit said a State, in a federal system of governance, has the exclusive power to regulate its finance through preparation and management of its budget and borrowings.

The State, represented by senior advocate Kapil Sibal and advocate C.K. Sasi, contended that recent actions, amendments and executive orders by the Centre were calculated to reduce Kerala to a state of penury.

Kerala said the Centre has imposed a net borrowing ceiling on the State in an arbitrary manner, limiting borrowings from all sources, including the open market. The Centre has deducted borrowings by State-owned enterprises where the principal and/or interest is serviced out of the budget or where such borrowings are made to finance schemes announced by the State. It has also imposed conditions on the State taking loans from outside India.

'Grave crisis'

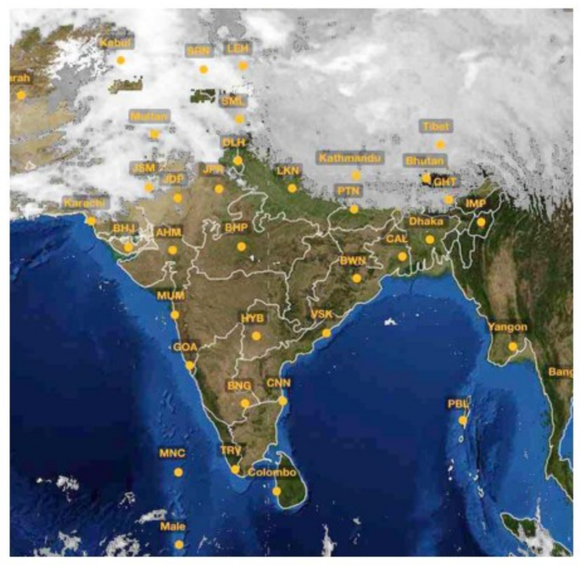
The State said the amendments made to the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act, 2003, amounted to a blatant encroachment into the "legislative domain of the State, as 'public debt of the State' is an item exclusively in the State List of the Constitution".

The actions of the Centre interfered with the exclusive constitutional power of Kerala to even "define" its annual budget and seek approval of the legislature for allocation of funds. The Centre's orders have "brought the operation of the State's budget to a grave crisis".

"Unless the net borrowing ceiling as fixed by the Kerala Fiscal Responsibility Act, 2003, based on which the State budget has been drawn up, is restored, the State is legitimately apprehensive that its treasury operations will be halted or starkly curtailed. This is a dire situation looming ahead and the immediate consequences to the State will be catastrophic," the suit said.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.00 HRS)

Forecast for Saturday: Dense/very dense fog likely in some/isolated parts over Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Sikkim and Odisha. Cold wave to severe cold wave conditions likely in some/isolated parts over Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	18.5	10.8	Kozhikode	—	34.4	23.9
Ahmedabad	—	30.4	16.5	Kurnool	—	33.8	19.4
Aizawl	—	21.4	—	Lucknow	—	17.2	6.0
Allahabad	—	15.4	7.6	Madurai	—	31.4	23.0
Bengaluru	—	28.4	16.9	Mangaluru	—	33.3	22.5
Bhopal	—	27.8	12.0	Mumbai	—	35.7	23.4
Bhubaneswar	—	27.6	18.0	Mysuru	—	28.0	16.7
Chandigarh	—	11.6	6.5	New Delhi	—	19.3	3.9
Chennai	—	30.7	23.5	Patna	—	15.4	8.1
Coimbatore	—	29.7	19.5	Port Blair	—	30.6	23.9
Dehradun	—	13.4	6.4	Puducherry	—	29.8	22.4
Gangtok	—	16.3	7.7	Pune	—	33.3	18.0
Goa	—	35.4	23.0	Raipur	—	30.2	18.3
Guwahati	—	21.0	14.0	Ranchi	—	23.1	9.5
Hubballi	—	33.0	19.0	Shillong	—	16.4	6.6
Hyderabad	—	30.7	18.1	Shimla	—	20.8	7.9
Imphal	—	24.0	4.7	Srinagar	—	9.7	-4.0
Jaipur	—	24.3	7.4	Thiruvananthapuram	—	33.7	25.0
Kochi	—	31.6	26.0	Tiruchi	—	31.7	22.4
Kohima	—	15.0	5.0	Vijayawada	—	30.4	21.8
Kolkata	—	22.6	13.0	Visakhapatnam	—	29.0	21.8

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	7	14	30	218	128	
Bengaluru	4	31	43	71	121	
Chennai	28	48	113	118	111	
Delhi	13	104	120	384	324	
Hyderabad	2	44	63	130	124	
Kolkata	11	61	22	253	160	
Lucknow	7	45	78	324	291	
Mumbai	—	127	45	267	160	
Pune	121	174	112	218	156	
Visakhapatnam	14	43	46	259	172	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Hanumangarh, Rajasthan recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 378 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Ooty, Tamil Nadu recorded a healthy AQI score of 33

Air Quality Code: Poor | Moderate | Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Hanagal case: 'Accused involved in another moral policing offence'

The Hindu Bureau
BELAGAVI

Investigation by police officials into the alleged "moral policing" and gang rape incident in Hanagal in Haveri district has revealed that some of the accused were involved in a similar offence in Haveri district a month ago.

District police are in possession of an earlier video clip in which two of the accused in the Hanagal case - Aftab Maqbul Ahmed Chandanakatti and Madarasab Mohammad Isak Mandakki - are clearly visible. The duo, along with some other youth, are seen harassing a Muslim girl. They repeatedly threaten to expose her "misdeeds" before her family, even as she pleads innocence.

The duo, along with some other youth, is seen harassing a Muslim girl in a video clip. They repeatedly threaten to expose her 'misdeeds' before her family

A senior police officer said that the investigators were looking into the history of all the accused. "We have some definite information about the accused that may lead us to strengthening the case against the arrested and to catch hold of the other accused," the officer said. SP Anshu Kumar said that "moral policing" would not be tolerated and that the accused would be brought to justice.

He said police beat would be increased in sensitive areas.

The victims of Hanagal in Haveri district have told the court that they had suffered kidnap, attempt to murder, and gang rape. The woman said she suffered gang rape by seven accused persons. The man said that the accused had tried to kill them. The police have revised the case accordingly, under Section 164 of the criminal procedure code.

Accused remanded

Meanwhile, a local court in Haveri district has remanded those accused of gang rape in 14-day police custody.

The revised FIR now lists seven accused persons, most of the identified offenders from neighbouring villages. Of them, three have been arrested. The police arrested Aftab Makabul Ahmed Chandankatti, 24, Madarsab Mohammad Isak Mandakki, 23, and Abdul Khadar Jaffar Sab Hanchinmani, 28, auto driver. The fourth accused Mohammad Saif Savikeri broke his leg when his bike rammed into a vehicle near Balur. He is undergoing surgery and will be arrested after he recovers, the police said.

The woman has been sent to the government hospital in Hangal for medical examination.

The alleged offence occurred on January 8. The case was registered on January 10. A revised FIR was filed on January 11 about the incident that occurred in a lodge in Hangar when accused forcefully entered a room and attacked them for maintaining an inter-faith relationship.

Sri Siddaramaiah
Hon'ble Chief Minister
Govt. of Karnataka

KARNATAKA STATE
ROAD SAFETY AUTHORITY

Sri D.K. Shivakumar
Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister
Govt. of Karnataka

HELMETS SAVE LIVES.

ALWAYS WEAR A HELMET
AND FASTEN IT PROPERLY.

- Correct helmet use is defined as strapped use of a full-face or non-full face helmet. Cap helmet is not permitted by law.
- Securely fastening/strapping of helmets is mandatory according to Section 129 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988. Not wearing helmets while riding two-wheelers is a punishable offence under Section 194D of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988.

Sri Ramalinga Reddy, Hon'ble Minister for Transport and Muzrai Department at a Departmental Programme

* https://ksp.karnataka.gov.in/storage/pdf-files/Road_Accident_Report_2022.pdf

25%*
OF ALL ROAD CRASH FATALITIES IN KARNATAKA IN 2022 WERE CAUSED BY TWO-WHEELER RIDERS NOT WEARING HELMETS

2,293*
TWO-WHEELER RIDERS DIED IN FATAL ROAD CRASHES DUE TO NOT WEARING HELMETS IN 2022

10%*
INCREASE SEEN IN NUMBER OF DEATHS DUE TO NOT WEARING HELMETS IN 2022 AS COMPARED TO 2021

As enshrined in our Constitution - to safeguard public property and to abjure violence is the fundamental duty of every citizen of India.

Road Safety - Our Priority

Dr. N.V. Prasad I.A.S.
Secretary,
Transport Department

Yogeesh A.M. I.A.S.
Commissioner,
Transport & Road Safety

J. Purushotham
Additional Commissioner & Member Secretary,
Karnataka State Road Safety Authority

A BG-BGE

Robust revenues

Strong direct tax receipts create a fiscal cushion and room for more reforms

With little under a quarter left in the financial year 2023-24, the government has met nearly 81% of its direct tax collection target. At ₹14.7 lakh crore, direct tax inflows net of refunds, as of January 10, were 19.4% higher than a year ago. Economists believe the exchequer's net direct tax kitty will end up surpassing the Budget estimate of ₹17.2 lakh crore by about a lakh crore if not more, with the full-year growth settling at around 18%. With Goods and Services Tax inflows also likely to beat the Budget math and non-tax revenues bolstered by a generous dividend from the central bank, overall revenues are likely to go beyond Budget hopes despite a relatively tepid intake from excise duties. Within direct taxes, corporate taxes have grown 12.4% while personal income taxes have yielded 27.3% higher revenues and this dichotomy may persist in coming years with the number of income-tax returns filed this assessment year hitting record levels (8.2 crore by December 31).

The healthy revenue uptick and appreciable widening of the tax filing base offers some comfort for the government's fiscal consolidation hopes going forward, amid apprehensions that this year's deficit target of 5.9% of GDP may be missed by a small margin. It also creates room for the Centre to undertake more reforms in taxation with a focus on simplifying it further for corporates and individuals. For instance, the multiple withholding tax rates for firms, that often lead to disputes, can be minimised to a handful of lower rates, if not one. Tax deduction and collection at source (TDS and TCS) rates, including the much-debated levy to track overseas spends, may be brought down a few notches – the taxman can continue to derive intelligence from them, irrespective of the rates. The new exemption-less personal income tax regime with lower rates and paperwork is gaining traction. Yet, the government can mull some mechanisms to nudge people into better life choices aligned with public policy goals that can also deepen financial markets and strengthen macro-fundamentals – encouraging retirement savings and health insurance, for instance. The 18% GST levy on health insurance must also be reconsidered, even as a broader rationalisation of GST rates is awaited, as it entails significant costs for lower- and middle-income households who face a real risk of slipping into poverty in the aftermath of a health-care crisis for a single member. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has signalled the Interim Budget 2024-25 will have no spectacular moves, so a repeat of the 2019 pre-election exercise that rejigged income-tax slabs may be unlikely. But the revenue buoyancy must enthuse policymakers to keep more reform options on the table for the new government to consider.

Numbers game

Factors affecting general improvement in sanitation must be overcome

For the eighth year running, the Centre has announced the Swachh Survekshan Awards, its annual exercise of awarding cities, towns and States which have performed impressively on various parameters of public sanitation. In an exercise that has now become predictable, the city of Indore, in Madhya Pradesh, has been adjudged India's cleanest city for the seventh year in a row. The only change is that this year, it has to share honours with Surat, Gujarat. Last year, Surat came second, which is not surprising as it usually occupied the higher echelons of the ranking ladder in earlier editions. Bhopal, Indore, Surat and Visakhapatnam have entrenched themselves over the years. There is a certain volatility beyond the top 10 – Ahmedabad, Chandigarh and Gwalior, for instance, are volatile cities – but the top cities are consistent. All of this is suggestive of a degree of stagnation.

Another quirk of the survey is that it creates multiple sub-categories, so that many more cities have a chance at top-scoring in some category or the other. Thus, while it is meaningful to create sub-categories based on population, some classifications stretch credulity. Mhow in Madhya Pradesh has been awarded as the cleanest 'cantonment' town. Varanasi and Prayagraj are proud winners of the 'Cleanest Ganga town' and Chandigarh is the cleanest 'Best Safaimitra Surakshit Sheher' (Cities safest for sanitation workers). Other than obvious criticisms of parochialism – why for instance cannot there be the cleanest Cauvery or Narmada town? – it ends up focusing too much attention on the top. The underlying principle of several ranking schemes put in place by the Centre is to 'motivate' sections – cities, villages, schools – to pull themselves up on their own mettle. While this works well for sporting contests, public sanitation is not something that is the result of a town or city actively choosing to be lazy or industrious in improving themselves. It is heavily influenced by their history, economic conditions and proximity to power. That a few cities are perpetually at the top means that there is less attention paid to the factors that hinder a general improvement in sanitation. One way to make future editions of the survey work as a useful barometer of progress is to acknowledge that consistent toppers have already put in place a well-oiled system and having done so, retire them from future rankings for a few years. This will throw focus and highlight challenges that stymie other cities. For civic sanitation to remain a sustainable movement, it is high time that the government intervenes and prevents it from being a numbers game.

Lord Ram, from 'mandir' to the more important 'rajya'

Sriram Panchu

is a senior advocate and mediator

The most remarkable aspect is that following the unanimous Supreme Court judgment awarding the disputed Babri Masjid site to Hindus, there was not a single incident of bloodshed in the entire country, let alone the loss of life. Amidst fears of widespread violence and the country being placed on full alert, this is indeed phenomenal.

As one who has delved into this matter deeper than most people, I would say that there were important factors at the root – the voiced utterance in many Muslim forums and discussions that this must be the last of such disputes, and second, this case must not be a precedent for other mosques which are under the scanner of some political organisations for whom mandir-masjid disputes are a handy tool. Correspondingly, if this were to be accepted, Muslims would respond positively to the very strong feeling among Hindus that this spot was needed to mark Lord Ram's birthplace, having no other in Ayodhya. And the realisation among those involved, centre of the dispute and periphery and stands, that it was in the primordial interest of the nation that this dispute ends without more damage.

Rounds of mediation

Fortunately, India has a progressive piece of legislation in the form of the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act 1991 (hereinafter the Act) which prohibits conversion of any place of worship from its state of existence as on the fifteenth day of August 1947. This was formulated to prevent such disputes from shredding this country. The only exception in this legislation was the Babri Masjid-Ram Janambhoomi dispute in Ayodhya.

This dispute wended its way through the labyrinth field of India's court system, producing in the Allahabad High Court a three-way panchayati-style partition of the land amongst the Hindu party styling itself as the representative of Ram Lalla, the Nirmohi Akhara and the Muslim Sunni Waqf Board. All appealed. Nine years later the matter was referred by the Supreme Court of India for mediation by former Supreme Court judge Ibrahim Kalifulla, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar and this writer.

One significant aspect of mediation is that it fosters positive communication, brings realities and long-term interests to the fore, and enables a clearer look at options to see where some give and take is possible. This happens not just at the mediation table but also in discussions and deliberations at which the mediators are not present.

The first round of mediation was brought to a rather hasty end by the Court in end July 2019, but to paraphrase Sri Aurobindo in his classic writing, The Hour of God, even though a settlement may "seem to pass on the wings of the wind", it shall return. It did indeed return and was agreed to and formulated by a significant array of the important parties, Muslim and Hindu. It was a simple document – the disputed land would be given up without claim of compensation, and all other places of worship including mosques would be protected by strengthening the Act. Subsidiary suggestions included the opening up of some select mosques under Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) control for worship. Two very generous donations of land near the disputed site in Ayodhya to set up an institute for communal harmony were noted.

Distinctive features

The Supreme Court acknowledged this settlement effort and referred to it, specifically noting the willingness to hand over the land. It could have, in the view of very senior retired judges, used this as the basis of an Order under Article 142 of the Constitution to resolve the dispute, or applied other provisions of the Code of Civil Procedure to further the settlement. It, however, chose not to, and instead went into facts and law to ultimately hold that since Hindus had established their usage over the outer part of the disputed land, the whole could be given to them. The judgment has been critiqued, strongly and extensively, both for its reasoning as well as the remarkably unique aspect that it does not bear the signature of its author. What is significant here is that it responded to Muslim concerns (shared by many Indians) by uploading the Places of Worship Act to the status of having the features of the Basic Structure of the Constitution, thus inhabiting a galaxy free from encroachment by a majoritarian Parliament.

Not even the most optimistic of judges would think that the country's acceptance of the Ayodhya decision stemmed from the law, logic or language of the judgment. For that we need to look at other factors, and amongst these must be a general weariness, the political landscape, but also very sharply the Muslim mind which predicated the cessation of masjid-mandir conflict in perpetuity over the loss of this one piece of land. And, correspondingly, the affirmation too by other parties, including significant Hindu entities, that this should be the last of such disputes for modern India. One significant Hindu party stayed away from affirming thus; its associates are the drum beaters for discordant notes in other places of worship.

Indeed, one distinctive feature of the demand for the Ram Mandir was that there was no other temple for Ram in his birthplace Ayodhya. This distinction has been drawn by seers across the board. Kashi and Mathura stand on a different footing because although the old temples were destroyed during Mughal rule, new temples on adjoining land have been built many years ago which have become major shrines. The Kashi Vishwanath temple was built in 1780, and the Srikrishna Janmasthan in 1982.

> The Ram Temple is now a reality, but more important than this is ensuring that religious disputes do not recur in India and for all to follow the dharma of Ram Rajya

Need for constitutional spine

Building the Ram Temple is a landmark achievement, but not the only important thing here. The other, as important if not more, is to ensure that these disputes do not recur and that can only be done by strict implementation, in letter and spirit, of the Places of Worship Act, as regards which the courts have turned in a dismal performance so far. The Act is a straightforward piece of legislation, requiring no legal adroitness for enforcement, but needs constitutional morality and spine. And living up to one's words. Much to Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat's credit, his public statements are far more statesmanlike than those emanating from judicial heads – there was a historic background to the RSS being involved in Ayodhya, but otherwise its work was man-making and not being involved in agitations (responding to a question on Gyanvapi and Mathura); one cannot be looking for a shivling in every mosque.

A last word on Lord Ram, who is or ought to be the central figure here. Not having his designated temple all these years has made no difference to his centrality in the hearts of Indians and his position as the *Maryada Purushottam* (the ideal man). But Ram is more than that – he is the ideal ruler, ensuring for all his subjects justice and protection and welfare and making righteousness the creed of his rule. Building a temple and installing a statue and creating an airport and the like is of far less worth than following the *dharma* of Ram Rajya. Lord Ram will smile then.

A case diary for the Indian police

R.K. Raghavan

is a former Central Bureau of Investigation Director

The three-day conference in Jaipur (in the first week of January) of police officers (Director General of Police level) from across India, was a kind of stocktaking exercise as well as learning experience, as many subjects of contemporary relevance in the area of Information Technology formed the core of the agenda.

The Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, who spoke at the meet, also interacted with most of the officers individually. The sign is that there is growing importance being attached to law enforcement in the country and the high stakes that the administration has in efficient policing.

Public image, federal issues

However, what cannot be swept under the carpet is the undeniable fact that the police have still to earn the trust and confidence of a majority of the populace. Their image in the public eye continues to be abysmal and no respectable citizen would ever want to go into a police station in India to seek help unless he is in extreme distress.

It is unfortunate that even seven decades after India's Independence, citizens do not have a guardian organisation that will reach out to the poorest in the community. This is why despite the honest intentions of the executive, there has been no upgradation in the reputation of our police forces. No police commission has been able to do much in this regard except to make a few inane observations.

An added complexity is the growing discord between the Centre and a few Opposition-led States. The 'New Delhi-conceived and managed' Indian Police Service (IPS) is perceived to be 'a permanent irritant' to some States who look upon the IPS as unreliable intruders over whom they have no control. States would prefer to have their own recruits *vis-à-vis* those with divided loyalties. This is likely to exacerbate itself in the years to come. I wonder whether this delicate subject was discussed at all in Jaipur. The role of the Enforcement Directorate (ED) and the implications it has for federal governance will have to be sorted out sooner rather than later. The attacks on ED officers in a few places in India is unfortunate and poses a danger to relations between New Delhi and States.

> The higher ranks in the police force have to be conscious of the many problems that confront policing

More technology adept

In fairness to the police, however, it must be said that they have become more technology-savvy. It is possibly because we have more educated policemen in the lower echelons than before. It is not because Indian youth rate a career in the police force very high. It is the sheer high rate of unemployment in India that is driving many to opt for a police job.

This is good so far as it goes. The question is whether the young men and women who become constables or sub-inspectors – the two ranks to which there is direct entry – will get an opportunity to display their talent.

This is because officers of the IPS alone hog all attention and the glory, depriving the lower ranks of any chance to prove themselves. The situation in most of the world is different. Every recruit, barring a few highly qualified candidates needed for their knowledge of science and technology, starts at the lowest rung of the ladder and rises up the ranks.

This is the argument against the IPS, notwithstanding the fact the IPS officer is rated highly for his or her sharp mind and zeal. A major restructuring that narrows the gap between the higher ranks and the lower ranks could help in any exercise to drastically improve the quality of policing. Knowledge and integrity will have to go together alongside genuine empathy for the common man if the image of India's police force has to improve.

This is ambitious but the blending can be achieved if senior police officers make an earnest attempt to change things. An anxiety to educate those at the lowest level in the forces is, unfortunately, not evident among IPS officers. It is unfortunate that the structure of the hierarchy works against spending quality time with the constabulary. Why cannot DGPs and their immediate subordinates spend an hour a day to teaching their ranks how to expand their frontiers of knowledge and in turn, how to use it for the benefit of the common man?

The shadow of politics

No discussion of policing can be concluded without referring to the eternal complaint of the politicisation of the police force. The nagging question of how to insulate our policemen from political caprice dominates all debates on the police. This knotty problem is intertwined with the democratic system of government. It is an art to politely say 'no' to a downright illegal demand made by grassroots politicians. Not many can do it with tact. This is an aspect of policing that will continue for decades to come. Ensuring the independence and the autonomy of operation for the police force is a pipe dream until the whole polity changes. To chastise the police alone as being a slave to political directives is dishonesty to the core.

The views expressed are personal

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Bangladesh vote

The recent elections in Bangladesh, though marked by an Opposition boycott, were bereft of both spirit and substance. It is sad that a nation that had consistently recorded a voter turnout of 80%-plus, barely touched 40% this time. This comes in an era witnessing a palpable trend of executive heads of democratic nations increasingly being impatient with the constraints of the parliamentary process. Given the compulsions of swift geopolitical currents and the need to be of reckoning as a growing economy, arguably a martinet governance is being preferred and pursued in earnest. Israel's Benjamin Netanyahu, in spite of compulsions to operate in a coalition, is being daringly authoritative, leveraging an unending conflict with neighbouring Palestine. Bangladesh has no such concerns. Perhaps the art of Opposition *per se*, is on the wane in democracies across geographies. This style of governance places imagery above consensus and substance to generate dismissiveness of political opposition and by extension, alternate opinion. This may not sustain, in the long haul.

R. Narayanan,
Navi Mumbai

Despite one of the lowest turnouts in Bangladesh's chequered electoral history, the Awami League sailed to victory. One needs to look at it this way. Sheikh Hasina's fifth term as Prime Minister will spell stability in the Indo-Pacific.

Karan Singh,
Chennai

Ties with Male

The new Maldives government led by President Mohamed Muizzu has given more than enough indication from the time it assumed office that it is not looking to India for any support. Under such circumstances, it would not be prudent for India to undermine its credibility and go after Male in search of a close relationship. If the Maldives government is more comfortable looking elsewhere for support then it is absolutely fine that way. India should learn to accept this.

S. Parthasarathy,
Chennai

The spat between India and the Maldives marks a new low in bilateral ties. As both nations navigate choppy waters, it is crucial to address the root causes and seek a diplomatic resolution. The Maldives' heavy reliance on tourism underscores the economic stakes involved. Stability in the region depends on prompt intervention and positive communication.

Jahangir Shaikh,
Mumbai

It is India's social media aggression that may have escalated the spat with the Maldives, in which Indian celebrities led the call to boycott the Indian Ocean archipelago as a tourist destination. It can prove to be a spectacular self-goal. India's other neighbours must be watching things closely and taking away their own lessons.
It begs the question: if social media trolls unleashed by so-called "IT cells" have hijacked India's diplomacy then Delhi must rein in the social media war and let the External Affairs Ministry do its job. However, both countries should engage in talks to find a resolution.

Mohammad Taukir,
Bettiah, Bihar

Clarity needed

The Swachh Survekshan awards 2023 will boost WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) improvement, achieve Sustainable Development Goal 6 and provide healthy competition among urban local bodies. However, the parameters used in the index do not seem to acknowledge and record the plight of manual scavengers, rag pickers and front line workers. The awards must also include developmental and rehabilitative initiatives taken for these groups.

Prakhar Singh,
New Delhi

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address.

T. Ganesan, who lives in a camp for refugees from Sri Lanka, in Irumboothipatty village in Karur district of Tamil Nadu, with his wife Mariamma. MOORTHY G.

The long wait for Indian citizenship

Sri Lankan refugees have been living in and outside refugee camps in Tamil Nadu for years. The Union government considers them illegal migrants and refuses to grant them citizenship. But thanks to judicial intervention, a few of them can finally be called Indian citizens, reports **T. Ramakrishnan**

Ganesan, 69, who lives in a camp for refugees from Sri Lanka, in Irumboothipatty village in Karur district of Tamil Nadu, describes November 30, 2023, as a day of "rebirth". It was on this day that the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court recognised him as an Indian. "I just couldn't believe it," he says, his subdued tone masking his joy. "I had been waiting for that moment for more than 30 years. It is as if I have got a second life."

> I had been waiting for that moment for more than 30 years. It is as if I have got a second life.
> GANESAN

The Government of India considers all refugees in India "illegal migrants" and India does not have a law governing refugees. This means that Sri Lankan refugees, who came to India fearing violence and persecution during the civil war, which lasted from 1983 to 2009, are ineligible for Indian citizenship even if they have lived in India, like Ganesan has, for over 30 years. Camps in Tamil Nadu house 58,457 refugees (as on March 31, 2023). There are also 33,375 refugees living outside these camps.

Though not Indian citizens, they are beneficiaries of several welfare measures. The Tamil Nadu government has been giving them monetary benefits that are higher than what is allowed by the Centre. The refugees are also covered under the public distribution system and their children are given educational assistance. The present Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) government, which renamed the refugee camps as rehabilitation camps, has also undertaken a project to renovate them.

The Central government favours voluntary repatriation and follows the principle of non-refoulement – the practice of not forcing refugees or asylum seekers to return to a country in which they are liable to be persecuted. Refugees, like foreign nationals, are governed by the Foreigners Act, 1946; the Registration of Foreigners Act, 1939; the Passport (Entry into India) Act, 1920; and the Citizenship Act, 1955. Many Sri Lankan refugees are said to be eligible to acquire citizenship by naturalisation or registration. But a circular issued by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs to the Tamil Nadu government in 1986 advises the latter not to entertain applications from them for citizenship.

From pillar to post

Ganesan was identified for repatriation under the 1964 and 1974 bilateral treaties between India and Sri Lanka that covered Indian-Origin Tamils (IOT) or hill country Tamils. In these treaties, India promised Sri Lanka that it would grant citizenship to 6 lakh people from Sri Lanka, along with their natural progeny. As many as 4,61,639 IOTs were repatriated to India from Sri Lanka after being given citizenship by the Indian High Commission in Sri Lanka, according to the Central government in February 2020.

Ganesan belongs to a section of Tamils in Sri Lanka who are descendants of workers who had migrated to the island country from Tamil Nadu in the 19th century and early 20th century. When Sri Lanka became independent, a large number of them were rendered stateless. Ganesan told the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court that he had submitted an application in 1970, but he was issued a passport only in August 1982 in Sri Lanka, while working in a tea plantation in the southern district of Matara. The passport, issued by the Assistant High Commissioner of Kandy to facilitate his travel to India, announced in bold letters that Ganesan was a "Citizen of India."

However, while the repatriation process was in progress, Sri Lanka witnessed an anti-Tamil pogrom in July 1983, amidst the civil war. As soon as Ganesan received the passport, he and his family were internally displaced. In February 1990, they fled the country and arrived by boat in Rameswaram in the Ramanathapuram district of Tamil Nadu.

As he came in a boat with about 60 others, all of whom, unlike him, were citizens of Sri Lanka, Ganesan's identity got subsumed into the category of refugees, in Rameswaram. Though sympathetic to Ganesan, his wife, and three children, as they were with other refugees, the authorities in Rameswaram were unwilling to regard him as an Indian despite his passport.

On arrival in Rameswaram, all the refugees were given food and milk packets following a preliminary verification. They were asked to go to Madathukulam, which is now a part of Tiruppur district, in the western region of the State. "We were put up at a noon meal centre and a godown. There were about 50 families with less than 200 people. We were there for about 15-16 months. When (former Indian Prime Minister) Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated in May 1991, we were all shifted to Mandapam (in Ramanathapuram district). Since 1996, I have been living in Irumboothipatty," says Ganesan.

K. Nalini lives in the Kottapattu camp in Tiruchi district. She holds the passport issued to her by the Regional Passport Officer, Tiruchi. MOORTHY G.

His son, Niranjan Prabhu, who works as a painter in Erode district, says his father sent petitions for citizenship to authorities at all levels, including the Prime Minister. "He would get a stock reply from the office of the District Collector, which was that the official did not have the power to give him citizenship. My father was undeterred and kept on pursuing the matter," he says.

The Madras High Court's ruling in *P. Ulaganathan and others v. Government of India* (2019) particularly motivated Ganesan. In that case, Justice G.R. Swaminathan directed Ulaganathan and 64 other petitioner-refugees from Sri Lanka, all from the Kottapattu camp in Tiruchi, to apply for Indian citizenship, even though he acknowledged that granting citizenship "falls within the exclusive executive domain" of the Centre. The petitioners of the case did not get any relief as the authorities rejected their applications.

> I have started harbouring the hope that the future of my two children, who were born after 2004, will be secure.
> K. NALINI

Eventually, it was his passport that helped Ganesan obtain citizenship. The Central government accepted before the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court that his passport was genuine – an admission that brought tremendous relief to Ganesan and his family.

Ganesan has not yet decided to seek a fresh passport. Perhaps, he is sentimentally attached to the passport issued in Sri Lanka, the one that established his 'Indianness'. As of now, he and his family are awaiting the next move of the authorities. The High Court has asked the Central and State governments to extend to them a rehabilitation package meant for repatriates from Sri Lanka which includes free housing sites, subject to the availability of government land.

'I was born in India'

"I have always considered myself Indian as I was born in India," says K. Nalini, 37, a mother of two. Nalini's father hailed from Mannar in the Northern Province of Sri Lanka and her mother from Kurunegala in the Northwestern Province.

When she saw scores of Tamil families being targeted in July 1983 across the island nation, Nalini's mother, Santhi, who was not married then, fled to Tamil Nadu. Between 1983 and 1987, nearly 1.34 lakh people arrived in Tamil Nadu, fearing for their lives. When Santhi was accommodated in the Mandapam camp, she met Kannan and married him. Now, Santhi and Kannan live in a camp in Chinnasalem, Kallakurichi district.

Nalini was born in Mandapam in April 1986. Since her marriage in 2013 to Kirubakaran, who belongs to the community of hill country Tamils in Sri Lanka and arrived in Tamil Nadu in 1984, Nalini has been living in the Kottapattu camp. Kirubakaran drives an autorickshaw for a living.

When Nalini sought an Indian passport, the officials rejected her application on the grounds that her parents were Sri Lankan nationals, and that she was a resident of the Kottapattu camp. What they did not consider was that Indian citizenship is automatically given to all those who were born in India on or after January 26, 1950, the day the Constitution came into force, but before July 1, 1987, the date the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 1986, came into force. As Nalini was born in 1986, i.e., before July 1, 1987, she is an Indian citizen as per Section 3(1)(a) of the Act.

Finally, on September 29, 2022, Nalini won her case in the Madras High Court. In support of its stand, the Court cited the Delhi High Court's decision in *Namgyal Dolkar v. Government of India* (2010) where the petitioner, who was born to Tibetan refugees in Kangra, Himachal Pradesh, was born eight days before Nalini.

Other factors too helped Nalini's case. P. Chidambaram, as the Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, said during a debate in November 1986 in the Lok Sabha on the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill that the proposed changes would not take retrospective effect. The proposed change was that those born after July 1, 1987, and before December 4, 2003, could get citizenship only if they were born in India and if either of their parents was an Indian citizen at the time of birth. The Delhi High Court quoted him as having said: "If we had made this Bill retrospective, then this would be a negation of human rights." Besides, the Madras High Court had recorded that even the Regional Passport Officer (RPO) in Tiruchi, who Nalini had approached originally, conceded that she had not renounced Indian citizenship. The Court's ruling has made Nalini happy for one more reason. "I have started harbouring the hope that the future of my two children, who were born after 2004, will be secure," she says.

The importance of a cut-off date

It is the court again which came to Neyatitus' rescue. Neyatitus, 21, falls under the category of Indians born on or after July 1, 1987, but before December 3, 2004, when another amendment to the Citizenship Act took effect. This stated that for a person to be considered Indian, in addition to being born in India on or after December 3, 2004, at least one of their parents should be an Indian citizen and neither parent should be an illegal migrant.

After completing a bachelor's degree in commerce from a government college in Sivaganga in Tamil Nadu in 2022, Neyatitus wanted to go to Germany to work and applied for a passport for this purpose.

It was then that questions came up about his identity. Neyatitus had apparently mentioned in his application that he was a "Sri Lankan refugee." No one questioned whether he was a refugee, but whether he was Sri Lankan. If so, he was supposed to go for his passport to the Deputy High Commission (DHC) of Sri Lanka in Chennai.

But Neyatitus chose to approach the RPO in Madurai for an Indian passport as he was legally advised to do so. His mother, Patchaiammal (now called Mary Christina), is an Indian citizen and his father, Sahayanathan, is a Sri Lankan refugee. He was born in January 2002, almost three years before the 2004 cut-off date. It was his date of birth and the nationality of his mother that helped the High Court rule in his favour in April 2023. But his brother, Yovan Snapaha, who is pursuing an engineering course in Coimbatore, does not qualify to be an Indian citizen as he was born after December 3, 2004.

The DHC has decided to issue all-country passports to Sri Lankan refugees unlike earlier, when one-time passports would be given to them to enter Sri Lanka, from where they were expected to apply for new passports to go to any third country. The Mission, which has started receiving applications, is planning to hold a formal event soon to present such passports.

Both Nalini and Neyatitus proudly display their Indian passports today. But there are many like them in refugee camps and outside, waiting for the day when they will be accorded citizenship, too. According to the provisional figures of a survey carried out by an official panel of the Tamil Nadu government among camp refugees in the State, there are 148 people like Nalini, born in India before July 1, 1987, to parents of Sri Lankan nationality or mixed parentage; 566 persons like Neyatitus, born before December 3, 2004, to refugee-local couples in Tamil Nadu; and 35 persons like Snapaha, born after December 3, 2004, to refugee-local couples in Tamil Nadu.

Revisiting the matter

As all three of them are Indians now, "Ganesan, Nalini, and Neyatitus should not be living in refugee camps any longer. But after having lived in them for so long, they require a rehabilitation scheme for smooth integration with the mainstream," says Romeo Roy Alfred, the advocate for all the three successful "refugee-Indians." The scheme comprises loans for establishing small business units, or for participating in self-employment schemes in dairy farming and the match industry, or for the provision of powered cycle-rickshaws. "More importantly, many were assigned small parcels of government lands, wherever available, for housing. I request the State government to ensure that Ganesan, Nalini, and Neyatitus are given the lands," he adds.

Alfred says that there must be a comprehensive survey among the refugees about their ancestry, with a particular reference to IOTs or hill country Tamils. A significant number of persons born to IOT or hill country Tamils in India have not visited Sri Lanka and it is unlikely that they will ever go to island, he says. He suggests that the authorities could relax the stipulation regarding "illegal migrants" and provide citizenship for them. Besides, the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019, grants Indian citizenship to non-Muslims from Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan who came to India on or before December 31, 2014, but leaves out refugees from Sri Lanka, many of whom came to the country decades ago. "This is why the Union government should revisit the matter."

From Page One

SC refuses to stay law on CEC, EC selection

Ms. Thakur's petition argued that the exclusion of the CJI "nullified" the committee. "The Prime Minister and his nominee [Cabinet Minister] would always be the deciding factor," the petition, filed through advocate Varun Thakur, said.

"Institutions supporting constitutional democracy must have an independent mechanism for appointments of its heads and members... They are compromising free and fair elections with the exclusion of the Chief Justice of India from the committee... Justice should not only be done but seen to be done," the petition said.

"The law is against the very concept of separation of powers," senior advocate Vikas Singh, for the petitioner, submitted.

In another petition, Gopal Singh, whose petition was filed by advocate-on-record Sanjeev Malhotra and drawn by advocate Anjale Patel, asked the court to implement an "independent system of selection, constituting a neutral and independent selection committee for appointment" of the CEC and ECs. The plea sought the court to injunct the implementation of the Gazette notification of December 28, 2023 rolling out 'The CEC and Other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Act.'

The judgment had directed the appointment to the posts of CEC and the ECs to be done by the President on the basis of the advice tendered by a committee consisting of the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha and, in case, there is no such leader, the leader of the largest party in the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, and the Chief Justice of India.

However, the new law laid down that the CEC and ECs would be appointed by the President on the recommendation of a selection committee consisting of the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha and a Union Cabinet Minister to be nominated by the Prime Minister.

PM begins special 11-day ritual before opening of Ram Temple in Ayodhya

In special message, Modi says God has chosen him as an instrument to represent all Indians at the consecration ceremony, urges everyone to celebrate the event as a 'Deepavali' at their own homes

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Friday that he has begun observing a special 11-day ritual leading up to the Ram Temple consecration ceremony in Ayodhya on January 22. In a special message, he also said he considers himself as a representative of the people of India at the ceremony.

Releasing a video on X, the Prime Minister said: "Only 11 days are left for the consecration of Ramlala in Ayodhya. I am fortunate that I will also be a witness to this auspicious occasion. The Lord has made me an instrument to represent all the people of India during the consecration. Keeping this in mind, I am starting a special ritual of 11 days from today. I am seeking blessings from all the people. At this moment, it is very difficult to express my feelings in words, but I have tried from my side."

Spiritual sojourn: A poster carrying a verse from *Ramcharitmanas* put up in Ayodhya, welcoming Prime Minister Narendra Modi. PTI

Spelling it out

He referred to the rituals as "*Yama Niyama*", which are described as ethical guidelines mentioned in the *Gita* and by sage Patanjali's as the first two limbs of the "eight limbs of Yoga". *Yama*, the first limb is about five ethical principles like *ahimsa* (non-violence), truthfulness, *asteya* (not stealing), *brahmacharya* (abstinence), and *aparigraha* (non-accumulation). *Niyama* includes *soucha* or cleanliness inside and outside, *santosha* (contentment), *tapas* (penance), *swadhyaya* (self-study) and *ishvarapranidhana* (surrender to the divine, higher power).

The Prime Minister further said that a part of the *Yama Niyama* would be a visit to Panchavati Dham in Nashik in Maharashtra, where he went to later in the day. According to lore, this place is where Lord Ram, Goddess Sita and Lakshman spent much of their exile.

Earlier, he had urged all to celebrate the temple's consecration as a "Deepavali" in their own homes.

Murmu invited for consecration

NEW DELHI

President Droupadi Murmu on Friday received the invitation for the consecration of Ram Temple in Ayodhya scheduled for January 22. The invitation was given by Nripendra Misra, chairman of the Ram temple construction committee, and Alok Kumar, working president of VHP. She will soon decide the time to visit, the VHP said in a press communique.

Do you need to be invited to visit your Lord, asks Congress

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Supriya Shrinate

In a strong pushback against the BJP's criticism of its leadership for declining the invitation to attend consecration of Lord Ram's idol at Ayodhya on January 22, the Congress on Friday asserted that it was not a religious but a political programme.

Addressing a press conference at the All India Congress Committee (AICC) headquarters, the party's media and publicity chief, Pawan Khera, and the head of social media wing, Supriya Shrinate, pointed out that the Shankaracharayas of four maths/*peeths* (monasteries) too declined to take part in the *pran pratishtha* (consecration ceremony) of Lord Ram's idol as it was not being done as per proper Hindu tradition.

"Is this a religious event? Is the *pran pratishtha* taking place under the supervision of the Shankaracharyas? All the four Shankaracharyas and the four *peeths* have said that consecration cannot take place in an incomplete temple. If this is not a religious event, then it's a political one," Mr. Khera alleged.

"Do you need to be invited at all to visit your Lord? Have you ever heard a political party handing out invitations? I don't need a middleman between me and my God," the Congress leader reasoned.

'Sought a later date'

Mr. Khera claimed that the Shankaracharyas were in favour of holding consecration ceremony during Ram Navami but it was not agreed to because of "political reasons". "Now, the BJP is trying to divide even *Sanatana Dharma*," alleged Ms. Shrinate.

She said that the leaders of the Uttar Pradesh unit of the Congress will be visiting Ayodhya on January 15 and the party hasn't stopped anyone from visiting the temple.

Only their top leaders, including party president Mallikarjun Kharge, parliamentary party chief Sonia Gandhi and Lok Sabha leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, have declined to attend the January 22 event, she said.

Separately, senior leader and Lok Sabha member Shashi Tharoor took to X to share a 1999 speech of Ms. Gandhi at Ramakrishna Mission to argue that the Congress's association with Hindu liberalism is a long-held conviction.

"Twenty-five years ago today, then Congress President Sonia Gandhi*ji* delivered this thoughtful address at the #NationalYouthDay function at the Ramakrishna Mission, New Delhi on 12th January 1999. It is hard to imagine a more effective message about Swami Vivekananda's teachings today," Mr. Tharoor said.

"And good to recall that @INCIndia's identification with Hindu liberalism is not a reaction to events in the last 10 years, but a long-held conviction," the Lok Sabha member from Kerala added.

In her speech, recalling the Gandhi family's association with Ramakrishna Mission, Ms. Gandhi had said, "...one of the very first decisions taken by Rajiv Gandhi after being elected Prime Minister was to declare that Swami Vivekananda's birthday would be celebrated as National Youth Day".

"It is tragic that Swami Vivekananda who admired, appreciated and swore by India's pluralistic and composite heritage has been over the years sought to be appropriated by certain sections of our society who spread the politics of hate and antagonism, who reject the secular foundations of our ancient civilisation and who seek to distort the very message of Hinduism – that of tolerance, harmony and understanding of different faiths," Ms. Gandhi had said in the speech shared by Mr. Tharoor on the social media platform, without naming anyone.

Volte-face: Is BRS going back to previous name?

B. Chandrashekhar
HYDERABAD

As the dust of Assembly election defeat is settling down in the BRS rank and file and its leadership, the party has shifted its focus to the preparation for the forthcoming Lok Sabha elections, and talk of its name change back to TRS.

The matter, according to party sources, was raised in every Parliamentary constituency meeting held so far, not only by the key leaders and activists of the LS seat areas but also by senior leaders, including former Deputy Chief Minister and Station Ghanpur MLA Kadiyam Srihari.

Several party activists, who have been giving their suggestions in writing too, were said to have raised the matter with a request to the party leadership to change the name back to TRS, stating that it was in sync with the people's psyche for over two decades.

It was out of the party leadership's ambitions of going national by foraying into the neighbouring States first starting with Maharashtra and showcasing the development model adopted here, that the party's name change was announced from TRS to BRS on October 5, 2022.

It followed party president K. Chandrasekhar Rao's visits to Delhi, West Bengal, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand and a few other States, opening of party offices in Delhi and Maharashtra and also holding a series of public meetings in Maharashtra - all with an eye to get a toe-hold in Maharashtra.

No invite for temple event, says Akhilesh; VHP counters

Press Trust of India
LUCKNOW

Samajwadi Party (SP) president Akhilesh Yadav on Friday said he had not received any invitation to the January 22 consecration ceremony at the Ayodhya Ram Temple yet, either in person or by courier, and demanded proof in case of it having been sent by post.

Speaking to reporters at his party office here, Mr. Yadav said: "They [referring to the BJP and VHP] are humiliating me. I have not received any invitation."

A Vishva Hindu Parishad official said he could not confirm anything about the invitation to the SP chief but added that Mr. Yadav's name is on the list of invitees.

Lord Ram has chosen Modi to build his temple, says Advani

Ishita Mishra
NEW DELHI

Calling Prime Minister Narendra Modi an "*annanya bhakt*" (devoted disciple) of Lord Ram, BJP stalwart L.K. Advani said he was "just the charioteer of the Ram Rath Yatra" that began in September 1990, to garner support for the construction of a Ram Temple in Ayodhya.

Speaking to Hindi magazine *Rashtra Dharma*, which is backed by the Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS), Mr. Advani referred to the "Ram Rath Yatra" which he took out 33 years ago "as the most transformative event in his political journey".

"Today the Rath Yatra completes 33 years. When we started the yatra on the morning of September 25, 1990, we did not know that the faith in Lord Ram with which we were starting the yatra would take the form of a movement in the country," Mr. Advani was quoted as saying.

Mr. Advani said Mr. Modi, who was his then assistant, wasn't very famous when the Rath Yatra was being taken out. Mr. Modi had remained with Mr. Advani throughout the Rath Yatra and the BJP veteran feels that at that very time "Lord Ram himself had chosen Modi, his devoted disciple, to build his Temple in Ayodhya".

He also remembered former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in the article and said that his absence is being felt at the moment.

15 suits to be consolidated in Mathura temple row

Ishita Mishra
NEW DELHI

In interest of justice, the Allahabad High Court has issued an order to consolidate 15 suits pertaining to Mathura's Sri Krishna Janmabhoomi-Shahi Idgah Masjid dispute.

The order was passed on Thursday by the Bench of Justice Mayank Jain on an application filed by the Hindu plaintiffs.

They submitted that most of the suits have common prayers while some have filed the cases seeking possession of Shahi Idgah premises and demolition of the same. The counsel representing the mosque and Uttar Pradesh Sunni Central Waqf Board had no objection on consolidating the suits.

FIR against 14 agents in Nicaragua flight case

Mahesh Langa
AHMEDABAD

Weeks after a Nicaragua-bound plane carrying Indians was grounded in France and later sent back to India, the Gujarat Police on Friday booked 14 immigration agents on charges of human smuggling.

The agency has named agents from Gujarat, Mumbai and Delhi. The FIR was lodged after interrogating over 60 passengers of the flight. The police have unearthed an international network of agents who lure people from India, promising them illegal immigration to the United States through the Mexico-U.S. border. They were booked on the charge of human trafficking under various Indian Penal Code (IPC) sections.

The agents named in the FIR include Jogendra aka Jaggi Paaji and Joginder Manasram from Delhi, and Salim from Dubai.

Focus on best practices as global meet on pulses returns to India

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

About 800 representatives of governmnents, as well as commercial and non-profit organisations involved in the production and processing of pulses will attend the Global Pulse Convention to be held here at the Taj Palace Hotel in February. Jointly organised by the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd. (NAFED) and the Global Pulse Confederation (GPC), the conference will see experts in the field sharing their views and experiences with various stakeholders and policymakers.

Union Consumer Affairs Secretary Rohit Kumar Singh said that pulses production has increased in India and the government is keen to learn and share practices globally. "It's a tricky task to keep the balance between the interest of the domestic farmers and the consumers. Despite the weather differences, we managed to keep the prices reasonably low," Mr. Singh said, addressing a press conference on the event to be held between February 14 and 17. He added that India's lentil production this year will be the highest globally.

For better connect: Pulses put on display for sale at a wholesale grocery market in New Delhi. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

The 2023 convention was held in Sydney. Organisers said that more than 40 countries will participate in the conference this year.

GPC president Vijay Iyengar said that the convention would amplify the message of pulses as smart crops.

"Pulses are vital in the development of sustainable food systems and key players when it comes to food security and nutrition in India. The time and place of GPC's New Delhi convention this year couldn't be more apt as we look at bringing the global pulses industry together to connect and collaborate," Mr. Iyengar said, adding that India has done tremendously well to enhance its domestic production.

'Superfood'

Talking to *The Hindu*, Mr. Iyengar said that India was the biggest producer and consumer of pulses worldwide, adding that the GPC was bringing the global industry to India. "This conference is being held in India after 18 years. We are hoping to dispense some knowledge to the Indian industry and at the same time learn the best practices here," he said, adding that pulses contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

"We feel that pulses help in diversifying the production, as they can be grown in arid conditions with less water. It is a superfood in a way, as it is nutritious and healthy. It gives nitrogen for soil. It's ideally suited for Indian consumption," he said.

LS privileges panel calls for revoking suspension of 3 MPs

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Privileges Committee of the Lok Sabha is learnt to have accepted the "regrets" expressed by Congress MPs Vijaykumar Vasanth, Abdul Khaleque, and J. Jayakumar in New Delhi on Friday for their alleged disrespect to the Chair during the Winter Session of Parliament.

The three MPs were among about 100 parliamentarians suspended during the session, and their case had been referred to the Privileges Committee to examine whether their actions had breached the privileges of the other members of the House.

Unanimous resolution

The panel, headed by BJP MP Sunil Kumar Singh, has also sent a unanimous resolution to Speaker Om Birla's office recommending that the suspensions be revoked. "The Speaker will take a decision on the resolution," a panel member said.

The member added that the three MPs had expressed their regret at the beginning of the meeting. "Since they expressed regret, the Committee unanimously decided to pass a resolution to revoke their suspension," the member added. If the Speaker accepts the resolution, the three members can attend the Budget Session of Parliament scheduled to begin at the end of January. The suspension of the other Opposition MPs, apart from these three, was to last only till the end of Winter Session.

In the Rajya Sabha, the suspension of 11 MPs has been referred to the Privileges Committee of the Upper House. The panel has started its proceedings and the MPs have been told to present their argumenton the charges against them.

Slapping incident: SC reprimands U.P. govt.

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday directly blamed the Uttar Pradesh government for the incident of a teacher at a Muzaffarnagar private school goading her students to slap their seven-year-old Muslim classmate.

"All this happened because the State did not do what it was expected to do. The State should be very concerned about the manner in which this incident happened," Justice A.S. Oka, heading a Bench, told the counsel for U.P. government.

"But it was a private school...," the State counsel protested.

The top court had last November asked experts from the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) to intervene and help with counselling of the child and his classmates in the school.

India's longest sea bridge inaugurated

The six-lane trans-harbour bridge is 21.8 km long with a 16.5 km sea-link; Atal Setu shows India's infrastructural prowess, says PM as he lays foundation stone for projects worth ₹12,700 crore; says government's vision is to improve ease of mobility of citizens by strengthening transport infrastructure

Purnima Sah
MUMBAI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated Atal Setu, India's longest sea bridge, on Friday.

Also known as the Mumbai Trans Harbour Link, the six-lane Atal Bihari Vajpayee Sewri-Nhava Sheva Atal Setu will reduce the two-hour journey between Mumbai and Navi Mumbai to a 20-minute ride.

Unveiling the bridge, the Prime Minister said: "The inauguration of Atal Setu shows India's infrastructural prowess and underscores the country's trajectory towards a 'Viksit Bharat'."

Of the total length of 21.8 km, 16.5 km is over the Arabian Sea.

The bridge, built with Japanese assistance, will open for public commute from Saturday.

Infra boost: Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Maharashtra Governor Ramesh Bais, Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, and others at the inauguration of the Atal Setu in Mumbai on Friday. ANI

The Prime Minister also laid the foundation stone for multiple development projects worth more than ₹12,700 crore in Navi Mumbai, in sectors including road and rail connectivity, drinking water, gems and jewellery, and women empowerment.

Jibe at Uddhav

Referring to the projects, Mr. Modi took a dig at Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray and said, "Most of these projects were initiated when there was a double-engine government in the State. People had no hopes from the previous government which had the habit of delaying development projects for years and commissioning them at an even higher cost. In 2016, I guaranteed the people that the country will move towards progress and here I am with the living proof."

Talking about the development work under his government, Mr. Modi said, "Earlier, multimillion crore scams were part of discussion, today, the discussions revolve around the completion of projects worth thousands of crores. We had Bhupen Hazarika Setu and Bogibeel Bridge in the northeast, Atal Tunnel and Chenab Bridge, multiple expressways, modern railway stations, eastern and western freight corridor, Vande Bharat, Amrit Bharat and Namo Bharat trains, and the inauguration of new airports."

The Nilwande Dam project, which started five decades ago, was completed under his government, he said. "Uran-Kharkopar railway line, started three decades ago, was fast-tracked by the double-engine government, and the first phase was dedicated to the nation today. Similarly, the first phase of Navi Mumbai Metro Project was completed after a long delay. Atal Setu was in planning for five to six decades."

"Our vision is to improve the ease of mobility of citizens by strengthening urban transport infrastructure and connectivity. Atal Setu will provide faster connectivity to the Mumbai International Airport and Navi Mumbai International Airport and will also reduce the travel time from Mumbai to Pune, Goa and South India. It will also improve connectivity between Mumbai Port and Jawaharlal Nehru Port Terminus," he added.

'Avoid trap of emotional issues and join the fight for justice'

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Friday said emotional issues were being politically misused and real issues were being diverted.

In a social media post on the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, celebrated as National Youth Day, Mr. Gandhi said people would do well to remember Swamiji's wisdom. He regarded the energy of the youth as the basis of a prosperous country. "The youth need to think about the identity of the India of our dreams. Quality of life or emotions? Youth raising provocative slogans or employed youth? Love or hate? Today, emotional issues are being misused politically by diverting attention from real issues, which is a betrayal of the people," he said in a post.

Unbearable burden

He said the government celebrates the present era as "Amrit Kaal", while the youth and the poor can barely manage to secure an education, earn a living, and secure medical assistance as unemployment and inflation add an unbearable burden.

"The emperor, intoxicated on the arrogance of power, is far detached from ground reality. That is why, to keep the flame of justice burning in this storm of injustice, crores of young *nyay yodhas* are joining me in this struggle, taking inspiration from Swami Vivekananda. Truth will prevail, justice will prevail!" Mr. Gandhi said.

> The emperor is far detached from ground reality. To keep the flame of justice burning in this storm of injustice, crores of young 'nyay yodhas' are joining me in this struggle
>
> **RAHUL GANDHI**
> Congress MP

He also addressed the national executive meeting of the Indian Youth Congress (IYC) and urged IYC workers to fight against injustice. IYC national president Srinivas B.V. was present as Mr. Gandhi launched an initiative called "*Rozgaar Do, Nyay Do*" (Provide employment, and justice).

Met activists

He met representatives of civil society organisations and people's movements ahead of the January 14 launch of the 6,700 km Manipur-to-Mumbai Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra.

The meeting, organised by a grouping of civil society organisations called Bharat Jodo Abhiyaan, was attended by activists who raised issues pertaining to justice that affect various groups, including Dalits, Adivasis, OBCs, women, unemployed youth, and unorganised workers.

Mr. Gandhi urged activists to use the yatra as a platform and asserted that a partnership between activists, political parties, voluntary organisations, movements and individuals is critical to tackle the "injustices inflicted by the BJP and the RSS".

Congress general secretary (organisation) K.C. Venugopal and senior leader Digvijaya Singh also interacted with the activists.

Theme song

The party released the theme song of the yatra on various social media platforms with the tagline, *Saho Mat, Daro Mat* (Don't suffer, don't be scared).

Meanwhile, Congress's Manipur president Keisham Meghachandra said the Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra will be flagged off from a private ground in Thoubal district of Manipur instead of Imphal because the State government had imposed conditions on use of Imphal's Palace Ground, the original venue.

Congress leaders Jairam Ramesh and K.C. Venugopal during a press conference in New Delhi on Wednesday. ANI

Yatra, seat sharing on agenda at INDIA bloc's online meeting today

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Leaders of the Indian National Developmental, Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) will take part in an online meeting on Saturday, the Congress said.

The meeting comes in the middle of seat-sharing talks and a day before the official launch of the Manipur-to-Mumbai Bharat Nyay Yatra on Sunday.

"INDIA party leaders will be meeting over Zoom tomorrow, January 13, at 11:30 a.m. They will review various issues like seat-sharing talks that have begun, participation in the Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra that will begin from Thoubal near Imphal day after tomorrow, and other important matters. *Badlega* Bharat. *Jeetega* INDIA! [India will change, INDIA will win]," Congress communication chief Jairam Ramesh said on Friday in a post on X (formerly Twitter).

'No agenda'

However, another Opposition leader claimed that no agenda had been cited as Congress general secretary (organisation) K.C. Venugopal only informed them about the meeting. "No agenda has been spelt out except that it will be a Zoom meeting," the leader said. The meeting comes amid Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge reaching out to INDIA bloc leaders for closer coordination.

The Hindu had earlier reported that in the past few days, Mr. Kharge had spoken to Janata Dal (U) chief and Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, his Tamil Nadu counterpart and Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) chief M.K. Stalin, Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Uddhav Thackeray, and others.

In touch with leaders

These efforts are said to have intensified after the Janata Dal (U) publicly conveyed its displeasure at Mr. Kumar not being made the convener of the Opposition bloc.

"Mr. Kharge has been in touch with the leaders of all INDIA bloc parties to figure out how best to create a system for closer coordination," Mr. Ramesh said on Wednesday, without specifying if the Opposition bloc would name a convener soon.

On seat-sharing talks with the Opposition parties, the Congress leader said, "The Congress leadership is committed to making INDIA bloc effective and we will go the extra mile to accommodate all our allies."

India, Saudi Arabia discuss defence ties, joint training

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

India and Saudi Arabia discussed ways to enhance navy-to-navy cooperation, joint training, and opportunities for joint ventures in defence production, as Admiral Fahad Abdullah S Al-Ghofaily, Chief of Staff, Royal Saudi Naval Forces, held discussion with top military brass on his four-day visit. On Thursday, he held talks with Navy chief Admiral R. Hari Kumar and Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan.

"Discussions held on mutual strategic interests, bilateral defence cooperation, joint ventures in defence production and technology collaboration and military training," the Integrated Defence Staff said.

Only youth can dilute dynasty politics in the country, says Modi

The Hindu Bureau
NASHIK/MUMBAI

Urging the youth to serve the nation through politics, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Friday that their participation will dilute *parivaarvad* (dynasty politics) prevailing in the country. Speaking after inaugurating the 27th National Youth Festival in Nashik, he said the greater the youth's participation in democracy, the better will be the future of the nation. "We hope the first-time voters can bring new energy and strength to our democracy," he added.

After a mega roadshow, followed by prayers at Nashik's Kalaram Temple and cultural events, Mr. Modi credited the youth with taking India into the top five economies of the world. "India is among the top three start-up ecosystems, making a record number of patents, and becoming a major manufacturing hub. All these achievements are because of the efforts and capabilities of the youth," said the Prime Minister.

Urging the youth to work hard and take the nation to new heights, Mr. Modi said, "I consider you the most fortunate generation in the history of India. It is encouraging to see the speed with which youth are getting linked to the MY-Bharat portal. In less than 75 days, 1.10 crore youth have registered on the portal."

'Sea of opportunities'

In the last 10 years, the present government provided a sea of opportunities to the youth, he said, mentioning the "implementation of the National Educational Policy, the development of a modern skill ecosystem, the implementation of PM Vishwakarma Yojana for artists and handicrafts sector, upskilling crores of youth with PM Kaushal Vikas Yojana, and setting up of new IITs and NITs".

Gujarat says trade summit attracted investments worth ₹26.33 lakh crore

The Hindu Bureau
GANDHINAGAR

The 10th edition of the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit concluded on Friday with Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) for 41,299 projects, with potential investment proposals worth ₹26.33 lakh crore, being signed during the mega event.

Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel posted on X that the summit attracted huge investments in sectors like green hydrogen and renewable power. According to the Chief Minister, if the MoUs signed at the previous summit (scheduled for 2022 but postponed due to pandemic) were added up, a total of 98,540 agreements with investment proposals worth more than ₹45 lakh crore were inked in 2022 and 2024.

As per details registered on the official investor facilitation portal, MoUs for a total of 98,540 projects with proposed investments of ₹45.20 lakh crore were inked during the period between the conclusion of the 9th and 10th editions of the summit.

Among the sectors with the highest number of investment proposals are urban development, minerals, chemicals, petrochemicals.

APPOINTMENT

राष्ट्रीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान राउरकेला, ओडिशा
National Institute of Technology Rourkela, Odisha

FACULTY RECRUITMENT

NIT Rourkela, an Institute of National Importance under Ministry of Education, Govt. of India invites online applications for various faculty positions vide Recruitment Advt. No. – NITR/ES/06/2023.

Sl. No.	Position	Pay Level	Vacancy
1	Assistant Professor Grade II	10	Total Vacancy – 101
2	Assistant Professor Grade II	11	
3	Assistant Professor Grade I	12	
4	Associate Professor	13A2	
5	Professor	14A	

Please visit the Career section of NIT Rourkela website http://www.nitrkl.ac.in for detailed advertisement and application form.

Closing Date – 20/01/2024 Sd/- Registrar

KERALA WATER AUTHORITY e-Tender Notice

Tender No : Re-e-Tender No.213 to 216/2023-24/SE/PHC/ALP, KIIFB-Augmentation and Modernization of water Supply to Alappuzha Municipality, Arrad. Mannanchery. Mararikulam South Panchayaths - Balance Works - Package 4, 7, 8 and 9 Laying Distribution lines in Alappuzha Municipality Zone 1, 2, 7 and 8 - Pipeline Work. **EMD :** Rs. 500000/-, **Tender fee :** Rs. 19518/-, **Last Date for submitting Tender :** 29-01-2024, 02:00:pm, **Phone :** 0477-2237954
Website : www.kwa.kerala.gov.in, www.etenders.kerala.gov.in

Superintending Engineer
KWA-JB-GL-6-2058-2023-24 PH circle, Alappuzha

TRANSMISSION CORPORATION OF TELANGANA LIMITED
E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE

The TSTRANSCO invites bids on e-procurement platform for the following works.
Specification No. Spec.No.TST-TRANS-e-04/2023-24
Name of the work : Supply, Erection, Testing and Commissioning of HTLS Conductor with non-metallic core in place of existing ACSR Zebra conductor for 220 ,KV Nagarjunasagar - Chalakurthy SC Line for a length of 15CKM and replacement of existing CTs and Isolators at both ends. **Note: 1)** Name & Address of the officer inviting tenders - Chief Engineer / Transmission / TSTRANSCO, Room No.501, A-Block, Vidyut Soudha, Hyderabad, **2)** The contractors/firms are requested to upload the information preferably in ZIP format. **3)** Further details can be seen @ **https://eprocurement.telangana.gov.in** and @ **https ://tender.telangana.gov.in**
Phone : 040-23396000, Extn: 3365, 3557, 040-23393453.
DIPR No.9424-PP/CL/ADVT/1/2023-24 Dt. 12.01.2024 Sd/- Chief Engineer/Transmission

Govt. of ODISHA - e-procurement Notice
Office of the Additional Chief Engineer, Phulbani Minor Irrigation Circle, Phulbani.
email Id :- micirclephulbani@gmail.com
Bid Identification No. NCB-01/DRIP-MICP/2023-24

1.	Bid Identification No.	NCB-01/DRIP-MICP/2023-24
2.	Name of work	Rehabilitation, Improvement and Basic Facility of Laigaon Dam in Boudh District of Odisha under DRIP-II & Rehabilitation, Improvement and Basic Facility of Parhel Dam in Boudh District of Odisha under DRIP-II
3.	Bid Security (in INR)/ Approx Estimated Cost	Rs.210000.00 & 280000.00 / Rs. 2,07,96,000/- & 2,73,02,000/- respectively.
4.	Bid Processing Fee (INR)	Rs.10,000.00 including GST each.
5.	Period of completion	11 (Eleven) calendar months including rainy season.
6.	Date & time of Availability of Bid Document in the Portal	20.01.2024 from 10.30AM (IST) to 19.02.2024 up to 3.00 PM (IST)
7.	Bid clarification date & time	24.01.2024 at 11.00 AM (IST) to 01.02.2024 during official working hour.
8.	Pre Bid Meeting date, time & venue	05.02.2024 at 11.30 AM (IST) 0/0 the Additional Chief Engineer, Phulbani M.I. Circle, Phulbani,
9.	Last date/Time for receipt of Bid in the Portal	19.02.2024 up to 3.00 PM (IST)
10.	Date, Time and Venue of opening of Technical bid in e-method	19.02.2024 at 4.00 PM (IST) O/O the Additional Chief Engineer, Phulbani M.I. Circle, Phulbani
11.	Date/Time of Opening of Financial Bid	To be intimated after evaluation of Technical Bid

Further details can be seen from the government web site. http://www.tendersodisha.gov.in
Additional Chief Engineer, Phulbani Minor Irrigation Circle, Phulbani
A-1203 : OIPR-32521/11/0001/2324

ODISHA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
(A Government of Odisha Undertaking)
Regd. Office: Janpath, Bhubaneswar-751022
CIN:U40102OR2004SGC007553

TENDER ALERT

1)E-TENDER NOTICE NO.-CPC-19/2023-24: Engineering, Supply, Erection, Testing & Commissioning of 2x40 MVA, 220/33 KV Grid S/S , Ranua in the Dist of Jajpur (220 KV GIS System and 33 KV AIS System) with associated 220kV LILO Line from existing 220kV New Duburi-Dhamara-Balasore to proposed S/S (Approx-17.45KM) on Turnkey Contract basis at an Estimated cost of **Rs.75,57,66,712.00.**
2)E-TENDER NOTICE NO.-CPC-35/2023-24: Engineering, Supply, Erection, Testing and Commissioning of, 220/33 KV Sub-Station with SAS at Khallikote along with 220 KV LILO line from one ckt of existing 220KV Narendrapur-Atri DC line to proposed 220/33Kv GSS, Khallikote at an Estimated cost of **Rs.44,40,78,800.57 .**
3)E-TENDER NOTICE NO.-CPC-41/2023-24: Engineering, Supply, Erection, Testing and Commissioning of 2x500 MVA, 2x63 MVA , 400/220/33 KV Sub-Station with SAS at Neulpoi, Dhenkanal along with 400 KV LILO line from existing 400KV Meramundali-New Duburi DC line & 400 KV LILO line from existing 400KV Meramundali-Mendhasal to proposed GSS, Neulpoi at an Estimated cost of **Rs.3,86,22,97,193.23 .**
4)E-TENDER NOTICE NO.-CPC-36/2023-24: Engineering, Supply, Erection, Testing and Commissioning of 132kV SC line through UG cabling from 220/132/33kV GSS Narendrapur to 132/33kV GSS Berhampur with one no 132kV bay extension at both ends, Narendrapur & Berhampur on Turnkey contract basis at an Estimated cost of **Rs.82,26,99,146.00 .**
5)E-EOI Notice No.CPC-27/2023-24: OPTCL invites Expression of Interest from Indian Consulting Agencies for facilitating day to day business of the organization in various activities. Last date for submission of EOI is 29.01.2024.
6)E-TENDER NOTICE NO.-CPC-37/2023-24: Procurement of 13 nos. 20MVA, 132/33kV Power Transformers at an Estimated cost of Rs.47,43,47,315.00.
7)E-TENDER NOTICE NO.-CPC-38/2023-24: Procurement of 03 nos. 63MVA, 132/33kV Power Transformers at an Estimated cost of **Rs.22,72,15,962.00.**
8)E-TENDER NOTICE NO.-CPC-39/2023-24: Procurement of 20 nos. 40MVA, 220/33kV Power Transformers at an Estimated cost of **Rs.1,38,63,70,200.00.**
9)E-TENDER NOTICE NO.-CPC-40/2023-24: Procurement of 09 nos. 40MVA, 132/33kV Power Transformers at an Estimated cost of **Rs.48,05,51,841.00.**
10)E-TENDER NOTICE NO.-CPC-42/2023-24: Procurement of 06 nos. 500MVA, 400/220/33kV Inter Connected Transformers(ICT) at an Estimated cost of **Rs.1,94,73,39,840.00.**
Complete set of bidding documents are available at **www.tenderwizard.com/OPTCL** and **www.optcl.co.in**.

HIPR-57/2023-24
CAD-3703 OIPR-04011/11/0167/2324
/optcl.odisha /optcl_odisha

INBRIEF

DRDO conducts successful flight test of Akash missile

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) conducted a successful flight test of the new generation Akash surface-to-air missile (SAM) from the Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur, off the coast of Odisha, on Friday. "The flight test was conducted against a high-speed unmanned aerial target at very low altitude. The target was successfully intercepted by the weapon system and destroyed. It has validated the functioning of the complete weapon system consisting of the missile with indigenously developed radio frequency seeker, launcher, multi-function radar and command, control & communication system," the DRDO said in a statement. The successful flight test has paved the way for user trials, it stated.

ED searches residences of Trinamool Minister, leaders

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Friday conducted searches at the residences of three Trinamool Congress leaders, including West Bengal Fire and Emergency Services Minister Sujit Bose, in connection with alleged irregularities in recruitment across municipalities in the State. The ED and the Central Bureau of Investigation are probing into the alleged irregularities in recruitment. Searches were also held at the residences of Trinamool Congress MLA Tapas Roy and former chairperson of North Dumdum Municipality, Subodh Chakraborty. The searches started early in the morning and continued till evening.

Possible debris of IAF aircraft located in Bay of Bengal after 7 years

The An-32 transport aircraft was on its way to Port Blair from Chennai when it went missing on July 22, 2016; there were 29 personnel on board

Dinakar Peri
NEW DELHI

Almost seven years after an Indian Air Force (IAF) An-32 transport aircraft with 29 personnel on board went missing over the Bay of Bengal while going to Port Blair from Chennai, debris possibly of the aircraft has been located by an autonomous underwater vehicle (AUV) on the sea bed approximately 140 nautical miles from the Chennai coast, the IAF said on Friday.

The An-32 medium transport aircraft (registration K-2743) took off on a routine courier flight from Chennai to Port Blair on July 22, 2016 at 8.30 a.m with 29 personnel but never reached the destination.

A massive search-and-rescue effort by ships and aircraft over several days could not locate any missing personnel or aircraft debris.

The National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT), which functions under the Ministry of Earth Sciences, had recently deployed the AUV with deep-sea exploration capability at the last-known location of the missing An-32, the IAF said in a statement.

Mission mode: An IAF An-32 aircraft stationed at the airbase in Srinagar, in this file photo.

"This search was conducted at a depth of 3,400 m using multiple payloads, including a multi-beam SONAR (Sound Navigation and Ranging), synthetic aperture SONAR and high resolution photography. Analysis of search images had indicated the presence of debris of a crashed aircraft on the sea bed approximately 140 nautical miles, approximately 310 km, from the Chennai coast."

The search images were scrutinised and found to be conforming with an An-32 aircraft, the IAF said, adding that this discovery at the probable crash site, with no other recorded history of any other missing aircraft report in the same area, pointed to the debris as possibly belonging to the crashed An-32.

300 sorties

As part of the search efforts then, the IAF had flown over 300 sorties and more than 1,000 hours over the area of interest in addition to efforts by the Navy and other agencies.

An underwater search too was carried out by two research vessels, *Samundra Ratnakar* of the Geological Survey of India and *Sagar Nidhi* of the NIOT, and a remotely operated vehicle which scanned up to depths of 3.5 km but without success.

At 25.37 lakh, India achieved record TB notifications in 2023

R. Prasad
CHENNAI

With 25,37,235 TB cases notified in 2023, India has bettered the TB notification number achieved in 2022. The number of TB cases notified in the public sector in 2023 stood at 16,99,119, while the number of TB cases notified by the private sector was 8,38,116. Whereas the TB notification by the public sector reached 93% of the target, it was 89% in the case of the private sector.

In 2022, India had notified 24,22,121 TB cases, which the India TB report 2023 remarked as a "milestone year for TB surveillance efforts in India, with a record high notification". TB case notification in 2022 was 13% more than what was achieved in 2021. Due to the pandemic, TB notifications fell sharply in 2020 and 2021.

Besides marking a record total TB notification, 2022 also recorded the highest ever TB case notification from the private sector – 7,33,694, which was 77.1% of the target notification. In 2023, the number of TB notifications from the private sector increased further to 8,38,116, with a record 89% of the target. But, despite the increase, it still accounts for only 33% of the total notifications in the country. Yet, the share of TB notifications by the private sector has been the highest ever achieved so far. In 2021, the share of TB notification by the private sector was 32%, which then decreased to 30% in 2022. However, TB notification by the private sector has been slowly but steadily increasing – 21% in 2017, 25% in 2018, 28% in 2019, and 31% in 2020.

The number of TB cases notified by the private sector has been woefully short of the targets set by the National Strategic Plan (NSP) 2022-2025. As per the target, the TB notification by the private sector was 35% in 2020, 45% in 2021, and 56% in 2022 and 2023. Even after achieving the highest TB notification of 33% in 2023, the notification by the private sector is yet to come anywhere close to the targets set by the NSP.

With 50% to 70% of TB patients in India seeking care in the private sector, the percentage of TB cases notified each year is small. This would mean that tens of thousands of TB cases in India are being missed each year. According to NSP, "close to 0.54 million TB patients remain uncaptured by TB surveillance/notification and services, and are likely in private health delivery systems or the community".

'2nd session of JEE-Main will be conducted after April 3'

Maitri Porecha
NEW DELHI

A clash between the dates of the Class 12 examinations of the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE), conducted by the National Testing Agency (NTA), had left parents and students perplexed.

On reviewing the circulars issued by the CBSE (in December) and the NTA (in September), it was observed that the dates of the examinations were overlapping.

The CBSE will conduct the examinations for Informatics Practices, Computer Science, and Information Technology on April 2, the last day of the exams, according to the date sheet.

While the first session of the JEE-Main is scheduled to be held between January 24 and February 1, before the Class 12 exams commence on February 15, the second session is scheduled to be held between April 1 and April 15, according to the circular.

The CBSE had requested the NTA to reschedule the exam for the benefit of students.

Subodh Singh, Director-General of the NTA, said the second session of JEE-Main would now be conducted after April 3.

Enhance compensation for hit-and-run victims: SC

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday directed the Centre to consider amending the Motor Vehicles Act to enhance the compensation granted to victims of hit-and-run accidents.

The Motor Vehicles Act allows the victims to be paid a compensation of ₹2 lakh in case of death and ₹50,000 for injuries caused during hit-and-run accidents.

"We direct the Central Government to consider whether the compensation amounts can be gradually enhanced annually. The Central Government shall take an appropriate decision on this issue within eight weeks from today," a Bench ordered.

Farmers' convention to chart action plan to defeat BJP

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Prime Minister has not made good on any of the written assurances made to farmers, says SKM

The national convention of the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM), an umbrella organisation of more than 500 farmers' outfits, will be held on January 16 in Jalandhar.

The meeting will discuss alternative agriculture and industrial policies ahead of the Lok Sabha election. The farmers' leaders will also chart strategies to defeat the BJP in the election.

The SKM, in a statement on Friday, said that around 1,000 delegates of the constituent organisations from across the country will participate in the convention.

'Denial of support'

"The convention is to expose the pro-corporate economic policies of the BJP-led Narendra Modi government, detrimental to farmers and workers and people at large, causing large scale unemployment, price rise, poverty, indebtedness, and unbridled rural migration," it said.

The meeting will also discuss the development narrative of the Centre based on the GDP rate and the claims of the country becoming a three trillion-dollar economy.

The SKM said such claims hide the decline in the per capita income, growing income inequality, and denial of minimum support price to farmers and minimum wage to workers. The SKM said two years have passed since they withdrew the agitations in Delhi, but the Prime Minister has not made good on any of the written assurances made to farmers, including implementation of the M.S. Swaminathan Commission's recommendations, waiving the debt of farmers and farm workers, stopping privatisation of electricity and placing of smart meters on farms and in farmers households.

"Farmers who faced natural disasters that ruined crops did not get insurance and adequate compensation in large parts of the country since the Pradhan Mantri Fazal Bima Yojna functions for corporate profiteering rather than protecting farmers and agriculture," the statement said.

Science Ministry team visits Hawaii to take stock of telescope project

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

In a signal of renewed enthusiasm for a global scientific project, an official delegation from the Department of Science and Technology visited Mauna Kea, an inactive volcano on the island of Hawaii in the U.S., to discuss "challenges" to the Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT) project, a press release said.

Clear view: Mauna Kea, an inactive volcano on the island of Hawaii, hosts multiple telescopes. AP

The TMT has been conceived as a 30-metre diameter primary-mirror optical and infrared telescope that will enable observations into deep space. It is proposed as a joint collaboration involving institutions in the U.S., Japan, China, Canada, and India. Indian participation in the project was approved by the Union Cabinet in 2014. India expects to be a major contributor to the project and will provide hardware worth $200 million.

Mauna Kea hosts multiple telescopes. However, upcoming projects have invited local opposition on the grounds that building telescopes violates religious and cultural customs, with many of these projects having been imposed upon the region without addressing the concerns of inhabitants.

Though permits for constructing the TMT were availed, the Supreme Court of Hawaii invalidated them in 2015. Permissions were restored in 2018, though construction is yet to begin because of continued local opposition. There are plans to construct the TMT at an alternate site, with the Observatorio del Roque de los Muchachos (ORM) on La Palma in Spain's Canary Islands seen as the next best choice.

In 2020, Ashutosh Sharma, the then-Secretary of the DST, told *The Hindu*, "We would like the project to move to an alternate site if all the procedures and permits there are in place. The difficulty is that even if construction [in Mauna Kea] were to go ahead, there could be future agitations." However, it is not clear whether India's views have changed.

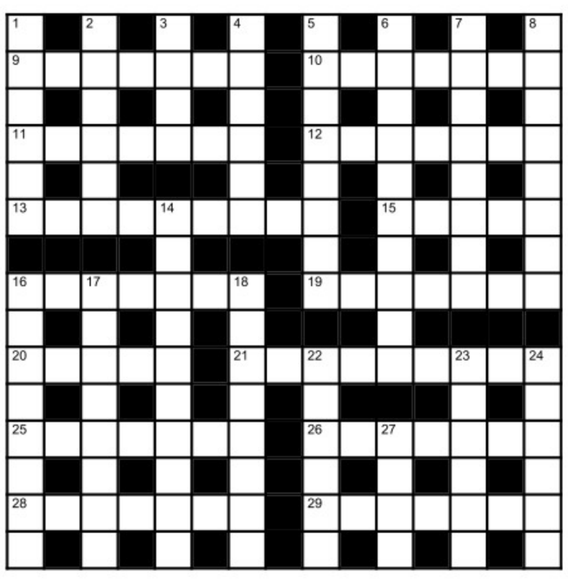
"The Mauna Kea site is the world's best for astronomy. Discussions are on to see how best the project can go forward with consensus and support of the local people. Hopefully, a decision on the site should be firm in the next two years," Annapurni Subramaniam, director of the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIAP), told *The Hindu*.

TH CROSSWORD + 14071

(set by Afterdark)

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site. @ *https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn*

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

9 Building studio at Spain which is small (7)
10 Instrument to essentially log cases before rainfall (7)
11 Exposed? Safe out of hospital (7)
12 Soldier in bar is reasonable (7)
13 A date between two people takes time and adjustment (9)
15 Once more in general swapping positions (5)
16 Heels used imaginatively in California football club (7)
19 Spot strike in Seoul outskirts by men essentially (7)
20 Man holding clubs with twinned crystal (5)
21 Director has problem with tip (9)
25 Squanderer has issue festering in money, right? (7)
26 Down payment direction to procure printer frequently (7)
28 Player training to catch some mackerel fish (7)
29 Publicise department's order on college grant (7)

Down

1 Policeman stripping Hulk on a roof (6)
2 Strike faster in disguise (6)
3 Adamant on changing sides to shoot (4)
4 Drop clues frequently on church official (6)
5 Corrupts election at say, Pondicherry with ease oddly (8)
6 Country delighted in misfortune? Strange humans basically (10)
7 Shoddy soldier on break after Mass (8)
8 Talk with network following norm once? Not on (8)
14 Leading story writers feature in appointment-book of clinic (10)
16 Plant a spy to steal note to trail corps (8)
17 Pardon former emcee wandering around America (6,2)
18 Resting places for butts (8)
22 Reward to tour European Union society to form connections (3-3)
23 Drove around to Ohio to go too far (6)
24 Out of England, sketching miserable and garish art (6)
27 Retiring teacher offered raise finally in advance (4)

SUDOKU

					5	2		1
			9			6	5	
	6				8		9	4
4		9						8
1						9		2
8	5		2				7	
	2	4			1			
9		3	5					

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

No.SS6037 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

Solution to previous puzzle

	P		B		P		E		R		O		D	
F		O		C		I		A		M		A		N
	U		E		N		S		I		S			
S		A		N		D		I		E		G		O
	S		T		A		R		R		Y			
T		A		N				N				L		U
N		O		R		D		I		C				
E		N		V		E		L		O		P		E
			D		H		S		E				T	
L		A		Y		B		Y		T		H		E
H		E		E		L		S				E		
M		E		E		V								
P		A		N		O		R		A		M		A
	M		A		I		N		L		Y		P	
P				P				R		E		L		A
O		F		F		P		A		T		T		O
N		E		D		O		W		N		R		O
U		O		T		O		M		C		O		N
S		E		N		S		U		A		L		E
V		E		N		G		E		E		T		Y
R		N												

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

8	2	3	5	1	6	9	4	7
1	9	4	2	7	3	8	5	6
6	5	7	8	9	4	1	3	2
4	1	2	9	6	7	5	8	3
9	3	6	4	5	8	7	2	1
7	8	5	3	2	1	4	6	9
2	6	9	7	8	5	3	1	4
5	4	1	6	3	9	2	7	8
3	7	8	1	4	2	6	9	5

FAITH

Ring in the new with Bhogi

Bhogi falls on the last day of Margazhi, a month that Lord Krishna calls His own. Through *Tiruppavai*, Andal guides everyone on the simplest way to devotion through *nama-sankirtan* and extolls the efficacy of chanting Govinda's name thrice. Adi Sankara too reiterates it in *Bhaja Govindham*, said Dhamal S. Ramakrishnan in a discourse. Chanting Govinda's name thrice is the mantra for salvation.

While Vaishnava temples celebrate Andal's wedding on the evening of Bhogi, the day also signals the last few hours of Dakshnayanam, when sun prepares to change directions and head north (Uttarayanam). The festival is also observed as Indra vizha. As someone who enjoys *bhogum* in Indralok, he is also called Bhogi. As rain god, he is also saluted for a bountiful monsoon. While being productive is important, one should not get puffed up with ego. This is the lesson Lord Krishna teaches Indra when the latter demands gratitude from all *ayarpadi*s. Krishna holds aloft Govardhan mountain and saves the faithful from Indra's fury and the latter realises his folly and becomes humble.

Historically, Bhogi is also observed as *Kari kazhi vizha*, where *kari* refers to monsoon; the festival is therefore a farewell to the monsoon, and the husk from the harvest is burnt. It symbolises burning the old, negative thoughts and replacing them with new, positive ones.

INBRIEF

Citi to slash 20,000 jobs through 2026, CFO says

Citigroup will cut 20,000 jobs over the next two years, its Chief Financial Officer Mark Mason said on Friday, after the bank reported a $1.8 billion loss for the fourth quarter. The lender, which currently has 2,39,000 employees worldwide, will reduce that headcount by 20,000 as part of a sweeping reorganisation, Mr. Mason told reporters. Citi also expects to shed a further 40,000 jobs when it lists its Mexican consumer unit Banamex in an initial public offering. REUTERS

Veranda unit to buy Tapasya, pay ₹120 crore for initial 50%

Veranda Learning Solutions (VLS) announced its subsidiary Veranda XL Learning would acquire 50% of Tapasya Educational Institutions Pvt. Ltd. (TEIPL) for ₹120 crore. On Friday, VLS entered into a definitive agreement to acquire TEIPL in three tranches. About 50% of the share capital will be acquired by March 2024. Another 1% by April 24, and the remaining share capital on or around the expiry of four years from the date of first tranche acquisition, the education firm said.

Sundram Fasteners to invest ₹1,411 cr. in TN for expansion

Sundram Fasteners Ltd. (SFL) said it had drawn up plans to invest up to ₹1,411 crore in Tamil Nadu for capacity expansion of existing products, including components for electric vehicles. The investment is proposed to be made in SFL's factories across the State at Padi, Mahindra World City, Velappanchavadi, Gummidipoondi, Hosur, Madurai and Villupuram. The planned investment spans up to FY28, SFL, one of the largest suppliers to OEMs and automakers globally, said in a statement.

Nov. factory output growth drops to 8-month low of 2.4%

Manufacturing growth sputters to 1.2% and consumer durables output drops to a 29-month low; just six of 23 manufacturing segments grow during the month and furniture output drops 30.5%

Vikas Dhoot
NEW DELHI

India's industrial output growth slumped to an eight-month low of 2.4% in November, from a 16-month high of 11.6% in October, with manufacturing output expansion slipping to the lowest pace in seven months at just 1.2%.

Consumer durables production shrank 5.4%, with output levels collapsing to their lowest since June 2021, when the country was in the grip of the second COVID pandemic wave. Electricity generation also fell to its lowest level since February 2023, although it was up 5.8% on a year-on-year basis, compared with a 20.4% uptick in October.

Just six of 23 manufacturing segments recorded growth in November, led by a 14.2% rise in coke and refined petroleum products, and other transport equipment (up 9.8%). On the other hand, furniture output dropped 30.5%, computers and electronics fell by 25%, while apparel production contracted 20.5% in November.

Base effects from November 2022, when the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) rose 7.6%, played a part in moderating the growth rate, but sequential contractions in electricity and manufacturing added further pressure, said CareEdge Ratings chief economist Rajani Sinha.

Losing steam

November industrial output drops from a 16-month high of 11.6% in October led by a significant drop in manufacturing

- Electricity generation falls to its lowest level since February and computer and electronics output drops 25%
- Base effects from Nov. 2022, when IIP rose 7.6%, play a role in moderating growth rate
- Output of consumer durables collapse to lowest level since June 2021, which was marred by the pandemic

LIC gets another I-T notice for ₹1,371-crore

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

The Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has received a demand notice from Income Tax Department for ₹1,370.60 crore.

The notice from Assistant Commissioner of Income Tax, Circle 3(2)(1) Mumbai for AY2011-12 follows those for ₹3,528.75 crore issued by the office for seven other assessment years. LIC intends to appeal to the Commissioner of Income Tax (Appeals) against the notices.

The notices come in the backdrop of an ITAT order, pertaining to taxation of interim bonus.

MARKETS

MARKET WATCH

	FRIDAY	% CHANGE
Sensex	72,568	1.18
US Dollar	82.95	0.07
Gold	63,280	0.20
Brent oil	78.54	-0.48

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Enter	3104.10	23.20
Adani Ports	1207.10	4.15
Apollo Hosp	5795.70	-74.20
Asian Paints	3277.80	-10.40
Axis Bank	1120.35	-5.40
Bajaj Auto	7301.95	3.10
Bajaj Finserv	1651.90	-17.35
Bajaj Finance	7661.05	-8.70
Bharti Airtel	1076.35	13.50
BPCL	458.25	-0.45
Britannia Ind	5151.10	14.40
Cipla	1308.00	-17.65
Coal India	381.10	-3.25
Divis Lab	3883.95	-21.25
Dr Reddys Lab	5688.85	-3.60
Eicher Motors	3870.85	-17.95
Grasim Ind	2111.55	27.85
HCL Tech	1540.80	56.00
HDFC Bank	1641.20	-7.80
HDFC Life	637.60	-6.40
Hero MotoCorp	4383.15	40.95
Hindalco	582.05	5.10
Hind Unilever	2544.00	7.80
ICICI Bank	1003.50	12.35
IndusInd Bank	1674.00	16.15
Infosys	1612.75	118.55
ITC	466.70	4.05
JSW Steel	825.80	3.75
Kotak Bank	1833.25	10.40
L&T	3568.80	63.95
LTIMindtree Ltd.	6237.05	277.10
M&M	1624.45	-4.20
Maruti Suzuki	9965.65	-45.45
NestleIndia	2549.60	-7.60
NTPC	312.65	-0.25
ONGC	223.40	11.55
PowerGrid Corp	239.50	-2.45
Reliance Ind	2741.45	21.65
SBI Life	1435.30	7.50
State Bank	633.60	13.40
Sun Pharma	1325.95	9.70
TataConsumerProduct	1159.00	39.75
Tata Motors	816.45	0.80
Tata Steel	135.30	0.40
TCS	3882.80	147.25
Tech Mahindra	1308.05	58.65
Titan	3726.00	27.40
UltraTech Cement	9808.45	-112.00
UPL	565.10	2.85
Wipro	465.45	17.25

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on January 12

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	82.72	83.04
Euro	90.61	90.96
British Pound	105.38	105.79
Japanese Yen (100)	56.96	57.19
Chinese Yuan	11.54	11.59
Swiss Franc	96.89	97.27
Singapore Dollar	62.10	62.35
Canadian Dollar	61.87	62.11
Malaysian Ringitt	17.79	17.87
Australian Dollar	55.32	55.54

Source:Indian Bank

RBI DG Michael Patra gets a 1-year extension

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Deputy Governor Michael Debabrata Patra, who is in charge of monetary policy and is a member of the monetary policy committee, has been given a one-year extension ahead of the end of his tenure.

"The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the reappointment of Dr. Michael Debabrata Patra, Deputy Governor, RBI for a further period of one year," the Centre said in a release.

Wipro's Q3 net profit slides almost 12% to ₹2,694.2 crore

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Wipro sees Q4 IT services revenue logging sequential growth of -1.5% to +0.5% in dollar terms

Wipro Ltd. on Friday reported a 11.7% decline in consolidated net profit to ₹2,694.2 crore in the third quarter ended December 31, from ₹3,053 crore in the year-earlier period.

Consolidated revenue from operations fell 4.4% to ₹22,205 crore, from ₹23,229 crore. The diversified company's IT services business logged revenue of $2,656.1 million, a 21% quarter-on-quarter drop.

"In a seasonally soft quarter, deal booking momentum remained strong," said CEO Thierry Delaporte. "Our large deals recorded a 20% year-to-date growth," he added.

Wipro booked orders worth $3.8 billion, including 14 large deal wins totalling to more than $900 million, in Q3, he said.

The company, which gets a bulk of its revenue from IT services, expects revenue from these services to log sequential growth of -1.5% to +0.5% in constant currency terms in the ongoing fourth quarter of FY24. "We expect revenue from our IT Services business to be in the range of $2,615 million to $2,669 million," Wipro forecast.

Commenting on the outlook, Mr. Delaporte said Wipro was starting to see early signs of return to growth in consulting, as demonstrated by the double-digit growth in bookings in its Capco business. Capco operates a global management consultancy, with focus on BFSI space.

"We see green shoots and positive trends stabilising, indicating growth returning," the CEO added.

Sensex, Nifty rise over 1% led by gains in IT stocks

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Equity benchmark indices Sensex and the Nifty on Friday gained more than 1% led by gains in IT stocks.

The S&P BSE Sensex added 847 points, or 1.18%, to close at 72,568.45 points. Top Sensex gainers included Infosys (up 7.84%), Tech Mahindra (4.73%), TCS (3.89%), Wipro (3.88%), HCL Tech (3.85%) and State Bank of India (2.17%).

The NSE Nifty-50 index too surged 247.35 points, or 1.14%, to close the week at 21,894.55 points.

Elgi to supply compressors to Siemens for 10 years

M. Soundariya Preetha
COIMBATORE

Air compressor manufacturer Elgi Equipments has signed a contract with Siemens to supply compressors for 10 years.

Elgi MD Jairam Varadaraj told *The Hindu* on Friday that the deliveries would start next fiscal. The company is not new to supplying compressors to Indian Railways. However, the contract with Siemens, signed last month, is the first with a private company that would supply locomotives to the railways, he said. Mr. Varadaraj said Elgi would maintain the compressors for 35 years from the date of supply.

HCL Tech Q3 net rises 6%, to pay ₹12 interim

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

C. Vijayakumar

HCL Tech reported third-quarter net profit rose 6.2% year-on-year to ₹4,350 crore. Revenue grew 6.5% and 6.7% YoY and QoQ, respectively, to ₹28,446 crore.

Services business met a new milestone of $3 billion run rate, said CFO Prateek Aggarwal. The board declared an interim dividend of ₹12 a share.

Telecom, media lead

C. Vijayakumar, CEO & MD, said the segment-wise performance was led by the telecommunications, media, publishing, and entertainment segment, which grew by 25.9% QoQ. The manufacturing sector was the second-largest contributor to growth with a 7.6% expansion sequentially, while retail and CPG grew 2.9% sequentially. However, life sciences and healthcare shrunk by 3.2% QoQ, while financial services slid 1.3%.

In Q3, attrition, excluding involuntary attrition and digital process operations, slid to 12.8%, from 14.2% QoQ. It had a total staff strength of 2,24,756 in Q3, up 3,617 sequentially.

Titan Engineering's Hosur unit expansion plan to cost ₹430 cr.

N. Anand
CHENNAI

Neelakantan P. Sridhar

Titan Engineering and Automation Ltd., (TEAL), a wholly owned subsidiary of Titan Co., has chalked out a ₹430-crore expansion plan of its Hosur plant, including doubling the capacity of turnkey automation lines for assembly and testing of electric vehicles.

"Currently, we are operating out of our own and leased premises spread across one lakh square feet and 1.50 lakh square feet, respectively," Chief Executive Officer N.P. Sridhar said during an interaction.

TEAL makes turnkey automation lines for electric two-wheeler makers in India and electric four-wheel manufacturers in Europe and Mexico. Annually, TEAL makes 40-50 turnkey automation lines, most customised as per the Original Equipment Manufacturer's needs.

To meet the growing demand, TEAL has purchased 10 acres of land in Hosur to increase the floor space to 0.5 million sq. ft. This would be done in two years and entail a total investment of ₹110 crore, including land and building.

Stating that TEAL was in the forefront of building assembly, automation and testing lines for EVs, he said 50% of revenue came from Europe and Mexico. In 2024, they would be exploring the U.S. market for E4Ws and components.

He said TEAL ended FY23 with ₹500 crore in revenue. Besides, TEAL is also setting up a facility for making critical components for wafer fab equipment industry costing ₹200 crore and a unit for making aerospace and defence components costing ₹120 crore.

National Institute for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (ni-msme)
An Organization of the Ministry of MSME, GoI&ISO 9001:2015 Certified
Yousufguda, Hyderabad-500045, Telangana
Ph.No.040-23633213, 258. www.nimsme.org
Advertisement No.ni-msme/CFI/2023/02, Date: 11.01.2024

RECRUITMENT OF CHAIR, CENTRE OF FINANCIAL INCLUSION (CFI)

Name of the Post	No. of Posts	Age Limit	Other Information
CHAIR	01	Between 55 and 65 years as on 01.01.2024	For further details regarding Qualification, Experience, Job Description, Remuneration, please visitInstitute's website: www.nimsme.org

Note:1. Last date for submission of Applications through online is 05.00 PM on 29.01.2024
2. Those who have applied in response to previous advertisement, need not apply.
3. Short listed candidates only will be called for Interview. Admn & Acct. Officer

KSITIL
EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)
Government of Kerala is keen to attract investments in the IT/ITES/BPO sector for developing the proposed four IT Corridors announced in the Budget Speech 2022-2023. Expression of Interest (EOI) is invited from reputed Investors, Developers and Technology Firms to invest and develop IT Infrastructure in the land parcels identified in these IT Corridors.
For more details, please visit https://ksitil.kerala.gov.in.
Date:13/01/2024 Managing Director
Trivandrum Kerala State IT Infrastructure Limited
D3/35/2024/I&PRD

Government of Karnataka
Department of Collegiate and Technical Education
NO. 1, Unnatha Shikshana Soudha, Sheshadri Road, Bangalore – 560 001.
Phone: 080 22223906, email: dce.tender2017@gmail.com
No.: DCE/ITS/PUR/1/2024-INFO (Computer No.1284537) Date: 12.01.2024
E-Tender Notification
The Commissioner for Collegiate and Technical Education, Bangalore hereby invites bids in Two-Cover system through e-Procurement portal from eligible bidders for the following Tender. The Tender Documents with detailed terms and conditions may be obtained from the website https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in.
Tender Schedules are as below

Sl. No.	Tender Name & Number	Date of Floating Tender on e- Procurement Portal	Date and Time of pre-bid meeting	Last date and Time for bidding through eprocurement portal
1.	Tender No: DCE/2023-24/IND0008 "Supply of Desktop Computer, UPS and Printers for Government First Grade Colleges of the Department of Collegiate and Technical Education"	11.01.2024	16.01.2024 11.00 AM	29.01.2024 5.00 PM

DIPR/CP/3039/Zen/2022-23
Sd/-
Director of Collegiate Education, Bangalore, Karnataka

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA, "e"- PROCUREMENT NOTICE
WORKS DEPARTMENT
E-mail : ceroads.bbsr@gmail.com
Bid Identification No. CE-DPI & R-34 / 2023-24
1. The Chief Engineer (DPI & Roads), Odisha on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites percentage rate bids in double cover system in ONLINE MODE from eligible contractors for Road work as mentioned below:
2. Nature of work : Road works
3. No. of work : 2 Nos.
4. Tender Paper Cost : Rs.10,000.00
5. Class of Contractor : A Class / Special Class / Super Class
6. Available of bid document in the website. : From 10.00 A.M. of 17.01.2024 to 4.30 PM of 31.01.2024.
7. Date of opening of Bid : Dt.31.01.2024 at 4.35 P.M.
8. The Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website : https://tenderodisha.gov.in . Any addendum / corrigendum / cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website.
Chief Engineer (DPI & Roads), Odisha (I/C).
OFFICE OF THE ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF (CIVIL), ODISHA, NIRMAN SOUDHA, BHUBANESWAR
B-1615 : OIPR-34111/11/0055/2324

Government of Odisha, "e"- Procurement Notice
INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB) (Short Tender Call Notice)
Bid Identification No. C.C.E.Dkl.(R&B) 29/2023-24
Letter No. 96 / Dt.10/01/2024 Email Id- sedklpwd@gmail.com
The Chief Construction Engineer, Dhenkanal (R&B) Circle, Dhenkanal on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites Percentage Rate bids in double cover system to be received in ONLINE MODE from eligible contractors for construction of Building works as detailed below:
1. Name of the work : Building works.
2. No of works : 02 (Two) Nos
3. Estimated Cost : Rs. 4.21 crore to Rs. 6.98 crore (as given in column No.03 of table)
4. Cost of tender paper : Rs.10,000.00
5. Class of contractor : 'A' & 'Special' Class (as given in column No.07 of table)
6. Period of Completion of work : 06 (Six) to 07 (Seven) Calendar months (as given in column No.08 of table)
7. Date and time of availability of bid Document in the website : From Dt.12.01.2024 to 5.00 P.M. of Dt.22.01.2024
8. Date of opening of bid : Dt.22.01.2024 at 5.30 P.M.
The bidders have to participate in ONLINE biding only, further details can be seen from the e- Procurement Portal : www.tendersodisha.gov.in. Any addendum / corrigendum / cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website.
Chief Engineer, Dhenkanal (R&B) Circle, Dhenkanal
B-1611 : OIPR - 34132/11/0037/2324

CHILIKA DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
PLOT NO.493(P), PALLASPALLI, POKHARIPUT ROAD, BHUBANESWAR - 751020
Phone : 91-674-2591544, Fax: 91-674-2590485,
Email :- chilika@chilika.com
e-PROCUREMENT
Tender Call Notice No.87/CDA/2023 Dtd.11.01.2024

01.	Name of the Work	:	Purchase of two nos. Ferry Craft
02.	Estimated Cost	:	Rs.2,63,88,800.00 (Excluding GST)
03.	Period of Completion	:	3 (Three Calendar) Months.
04.	Date & Time of availability of Bid Document in the portal	:	16.01.2024 to 05.02.2024 upto 4 P.M.
05.	Bid Clarification date	:	24.01.2024 at 3 PM (only office working days)
06.	Last Date / Time for submission of Bids in the portal	:	05.02.2024 upto 5.00 P.M.
07.	Date & Time of opening of Technical Bids	:	On 06.02.2024 at 11.30 AM in the O/o the Chief Executive, Chilika Development Authority, Plot No.493(P), Palaspalli, Bhubaneswar - 751020.
08.	Name and Address of the Office Inviting Tender (O.I.T.)	:	Addl. Chief Executive, Chilika Development Authority, Plot No.493(P), Pallaspalli, Pokhariput Road, Bhubaneswar-751020

Further information and other details are available for downloading from the e-procurement portal "https://tendersodisha.gov.in". Addendum / Corrigendum if required will be available only in the Website e-procurement portal "https://tendersodisha.gov.in"
Addl. Chief Executive
Chilika Development Authority
CAD-: OIPR-08138/11/0013/2324

e-mail ID - sepwd_rgda@yahoo.com; Phone/Fax No - 06856 - 223049
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER, RAYAGADA (R&B) CIRCLE, RAYAGADA
e-Procurement Notice
Bid Identification No. C.C.E (RANDB) RGDA- 17 / 2023-2024 (Online) 05.01.2024
No.26 Date : 05.01.2024
INVITATION FOR BIDS

1.	The Chief Construction Engineer, Rayagada (R&B) Circle, Rayagada on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites percentage rate bids in double cover mode to be received in online mode only for the construction of works as detailed in the table below:		
2.	Nature of Work	:	Building Works
3.	No. of Works	:	03 (Three) nos. of works
4.	Estimated Cost (Approximately)	:	Rs.289.70 Lakhs, Rs.326.83 Lakhs, Rs.355.58 Lakhs,
5.	Bid Cost (Online)	:	Rs.10,000/- (each)
6.	EMD / Bid Security Amount (Online)	:	One Percentage of the Estimated Cost.
7.	Class of Contractor	:	"B" and "A" Class as per Financial Eligibility.
8.	Availability of Bid Documents in the website	:	11.00 Hrs of Dt.16.01.2024 to 17.00 Hrs. of Dt.30.01.2024
9.	Date of Opening of Bid	:	11.00 Hrs of Dt. 31.01.2024
10.	The Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website : https://tendersorissa.gov.in . Any Addendum / Corrigendum / Cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website. The authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids without assigning any reason thereof.		

Chief Construction Engineer, Rayagada (R&B) Circle, Rayagada.
B-1603: OIPR-34154/11/0023/2324

COLOMBO

Sri Lanka says debt restructure to be finalised by beginning of April

GETTY IMAGES

Sri Lanka's bankrupt government said on Friday that a foreign debt restructure would be finalised by the beginning of April, after signs the economy was emerging from its worst crisis on record. The island nation defaulted on its $46 billion foreign debt in 2022 after a foreign exchange wipeout left it unable to import essentials. AFP

KHARTOUM

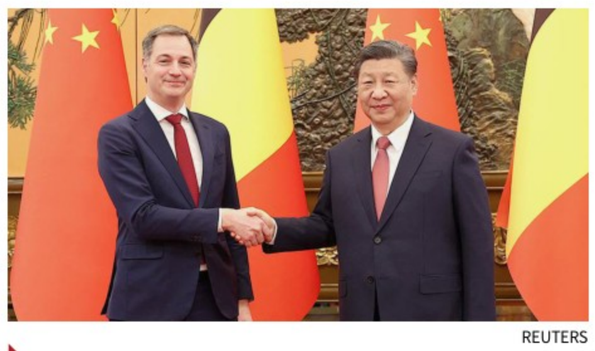
More than 33 civilians killed in strikes on Sudan capital: NGO

AFP

Fighting between rival Sudanese forces including air strikes on the capital Khartoum have killed at least 33 civilians, pro-democracy lawyers said overnight to Friday. Sudan has been gripped by nearly nine months of war, in which at least 12,190 lives were claimed, says Armed Conflict Location & Event Data project, an NGO. AFP

SHANGHAI

China's Xi meets Belgium PM; calls for closer ties with Europe



REUTERS

China is willing to strengthen relations with Europe, President Xi Jinping said on Friday, at a meeting with Belgian Prime Minister Alexander De Croo in Beijing. Mr. De Croo arrived in China on Thursday, attending the inauguration of the new Belgian Embassy in Beijing and meeting with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi. AFP

KYIV

U.K. Prime Minister visits Kyiv to announce more support in war

AP

U.K. Prime Minister Rishi Sunak travelled to Kyiv on Friday to unveil a new support package for Ukraine, including an increase in military funding for its war with Russia. The 2.5 billion pounds ($3.2 billion) in military funding for Ukraine over the next financial year will cover long-range missiles, thousands of drones, and air defence. AP

U.S., U.K. launch joint strikes against Houthi targets after Red Sea attacks

United States-led coalition says the attacks were carried out in Yemen on Friday 'in accordance with the inherent right of individual and collective self-defence'; External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar held a call with Anthony Blinken on Thursday

Dinakar Peri
Kallol Bhattacherjee
NEW DELHI

Strong protest: Supporters of the Houthi movement rallying to denounce the U.S., Britain air strikes in Sana'a on Friday. REUTERS

Amid spiralling missile and drone strikes on commercial shipping in the Red Sea, the U.S. and U.K.-led coalition launched joint strikes on Houthi military targets in Yemen, the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) said on Friday. Ahead of this development, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar held a telephonic conversation with U.S. Secretary of State Anthony Blinken.

On Friday, 10 nations led by the U.S. and the U.K. issued a joint statement on the strikes. Earlier these countries had asked the Houthis to "immediately end illegal attacks" on commercial tankers and warned that "malign actors would be held accountable" should they continue. It has been learned that India participated in a discussion on the crisis at the UNSC on December 19, but in a "listening role".

The joint strikes were conducted "in accordance with the inherent right of individual and collective self-defence, consistent with the UN Charter, against a number of targets in Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen," said the statement on Friday.

"Today's action demonstrated a shared commitment to freedom of navigation, international commerce, and defending the lives of mariners from illegal and unjustifiable attacks." it added.

On Thursday evening, Mr. Jaishankar said he had a "a good discussion with my friend U.S. Secretary Blinken".

"Our conversation focused on maritime security challenges, especially the Red Sea region. Appreciated his insights on ongoing situation in West Asia, including Gaza. Exchanged perspectives on developments pertaining to the Ukraine conflict. Looking forward to realizing our extensive cooperation agenda for 2024," he posted on social media platform 'X'. However, there has been no response from India on the air strike.

The USCENTCOM said the joint strikes were launched by U.S. forces in coordination with others on Houthi targets to degrade their capability to continue their attacks on U.S. and international vessels and commercial shipping in the Red Sea.

In Sana'a, Houthis said five people were killed and six injured in the air strike. "The Americans and the British should not believe that they will escape the punishment of our heroic armed forces," the Huthis' Supreme Political Council said in a statement on their official media.

(With inputs from AFP)

Hamas is guilty of genocide, Israel tells The Hague court

Associated Press
THE HAGUE

Accused of committing genocide against Palestinians, Israel insisted at the United Nations' highest court on Friday that its war in Gaza was a legitimate defence of its people and said instead that Hamas was guilty of genocide.

Israel described the allegations levelled by South Africa as hypocritical and said that one of the biggest cases ever to come before an international court reflected a world turned upside down. Israeli leaders defend their air and ground offensive in Gaza as a legitimate response to Hamas's October 7 attack, when militants stormed through Israeli communities, killed some 1,200 people and took around 250 hostage.

Israeli legal adviser Tal Becker told a packed auditorium at the ornate Palace of Peace in The Hague that the country is fighting a "war it did not start and did not want".

Tal Becker

"In these circumstances, there can hardly be a charge more false and more malevolent than the allegation against Israel of genocide," he added, noting that the horrible suffering of civilians in war was not enough to level a charge of genocide.

South African lawyers asked the court on Thursday to order an immediate halt to Israeli military operations in the besieged coastal territory that is home to 2.3 million Palestinians. A decision on that request will probably take weeks, and the full case is likely to last years – though it's unclear if Israel would follow any court orders.

On Friday, Israel focused on the brutality of the October 7 attacks, presenting chilling video and audio to a hushed audience to highlight what happened that day.

"They tortured children in front of parents and parents in front of children, burned people, including infants alive, and systematically raped and mutilated scores of women, men and children," Mr. Becker said.

South Africa's request, he said, amounts to an attempt to prevent Israel from defending against that assault.

Myanmar junta, armed alliance reach ceasefire

Agence France-Presse
YANGON

Myanmar's military and an alliance of armed ethnic minority groups announced a ceasefire on Friday after months of conflict that has posed the biggest threat to the junta since it seized power in 2021.

Conflict has raged in Myanmar's northern Shan state since October, when the alliance of ethnic minority groups – National Liberation Army (TNLA), the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA), and the Arakan Army (AA) – launched an offensive against the junta.

"The two sides agreed to an immediate ceasefire, to disengage military personnel and resolve relevant disputes and demands through peaceful negotiations," Chinese Foreign ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said.

"With the help of China's facilitation, there was a meeting in Kunming. We have reached a ceasefire agreement," Junta spokesperson Zaw Min Tun said.

Taiwan parties rally on eve of pivotal election

Agence France-Presse
TAIPEI

Show of strength: People attending the final campaign rally of Kuomintang , in New Taipei City on Friday. REUTERS

Tens of thousands of supporters flocked to noisy, colourful rallies for Taiwan's three main political parties on Friday, as the candidates made a last push for votes in an election that China has warned could take the island closer to war.

Taiwan's bustling democracy of 23 million people is separated by a narrow 180-km strait from communist-ruled China, which claims the island as part of its territory.

Saturday's election is being closely watched around the world as the winner will lead the strategically important island as it manages ties with an increasingly assertive China. Vice President Lai Ching-te, the front-runner candidate of the ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), paints the election as a choice between "democracy and autocracy" – criticising his main opponent Hou Yu-ih of the Kuomintang (KMT) for being too "pro-China".

Beijing in recent years has maintained a near-daily military presence around Taiwan, sending in warplanes and ships to its surroundings in "grey zone" harassment actions which fall short of outright provocation.

The weeks leading up to Saturday's vote have also seen a flurry of Chinese balloons crossing the Taiwan Strait's sensitive median line, which Taipei authorities have slammed.

Chinese media warns against threat narrative

Reuters
BEIJING

Chinese state media warned on Friday that a report by a prominent U.S. think tank on the military uses of Chinese scientific research across the Indian Ocean gave "ammunition" to countries bent on concocting threats from China.

The report this week by the Washington-based Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) "comes at a time when some countries need to manufacture a 'China threat' narrative in the Indian Ocean region and provides them with ammunition", the state-controlled tabloid *Global Times* said.

"While scientific and commercial benefits may accrue from Chinese oceanographic research, these activities may also prove crucial for the [People's Liberation Army] in expanding its operational reach in the Indian Ocean," the study said.

China said its marine research fully complied with the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.

Sport

Stunning Force for B. Vijay Reddy Memorial Cup

RACING

HYDERABAD: Trainer S.S.F. Hassan's horse Stunning Force may score over his rivals in the B. Vijay Reddy Memorial Cup, the chief event of Saturday's (Jan. 13) races.

1 ANMOL RATAN PLATE (DIV. II) (1,600m), 5-y-o and upward, rated 40 to 65 (Cat. II), 1.15 p.m.: 1. N R I Superpower (4) Shivansh 60.5, 2. Ivanhoe (5) Surya Prakash 59.5, 3. Prague (9) Ashad Asbar 58, 4. Delhi Heights (10) Vivek G 57.5, 5. Kings Best (1) Kuldeep Singh (Sr) 57, 6. Capriati (6) P. Sai Kumar 54.5, 7. Brooklyn Beauty (3) Mohit Singh 54, 8. Role Model (8) Nakhat Singh 53.5, 9. Quality Warrior (2) Afroz Khan 52.5 and 10. Alpine Girl (7) Kuldeep Singh (Jr) 50.

1. N R I SUPERPOWER 2. PRAGUE 3. ALPINE GIRL

2 ATTRACTRESS PLATE (1,100m), (Terms) Maiden, 3-y-o only, 1.45: 1. Aditya (9) Kuldeep Singh (Sr) 56, 2. Bellingham (4) Kaviraj 56, 3. Golden Unicorn (5) Nikhil Naidu 56, 4. Rare Vue (13) G. Naresh 56, 5. Royal Parade (3) R.S. Jodha 56, 6. Sunny Day (11) Surya Prakash 56, 7. Anahita (6) N.B. Kuldeep 54.5, 8. Cannon Rose (1) P. Sai Kumar 54.5, 9. High Heels (8) Md. Ismail 54.5, 10. Imperia (2) Ashad Asbar 54.5, 11. Lady Jane (12) Nakhat Singh 54.5, 12. Newfound Glory (7) Santosh Raj 54.5 and 13. Skyward (10) Kiran Naidu 54.5.

1. CANNON ROSE, 2. IMPERIA, 3. BELLINGHAM

3 TWIN STAR CUP (1,400m), rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 2.15: 1. Encore (2) R.S. Jodha 61, 2. Queen Empress (9) Shivansh 60.5, 3. Stunning Art (8) Vivek G 59, 4. Dali's Destiny (1) Ajay Kumar 57.5, 5. Samrat (4) Kuldeep Singh (Jr) 54.5, 6. Wot's Up Jay (6) Kiran Naidu 54.5, 7. Free To Win (7) Santosh Raj 53.5, 8. Alcahol Free (3) Ashad Asbar 52.5 and 9. Glimmer Of Hope (5) Surya Prakash 50.

1. DALI'S DESTINY, 2. SAMRAT, 3. ENCORE

4 BALLERINA STAR PLATE (DIV. I) (1,200m), 5-y-o and upward, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 2.45: 1. Hard To Toss (7) A. Imran Khan 61.5, 2. Star Racer (1) Kuldeep Singh (Jr) 61.5, 3. Classy Dame (12) Ajay Kumar 60.5, 4. Master Touch (2) Mohit Singh 60.5, 5. Creative Force (6) Kuldeep Singh (Sr) 59, 6. Golden Forza (13) Nikhil Naidu 58, 7. Silver Lining (10) Mukesh Kumar 58, 8. Angel Tesoro (5) P. Sai Kumar 56, 9. Cosmico (8) Vivek G 56, 10. Swiss Girl (3) Md. Ismail 55.5, 11. Inderdhanush (11) Shivansh 54, 12. Sadiya (14) G. Naresh 54, 13. Fortune Art (4) Santosh Raj 51.5 and 14. It's My Time (9) Surya Prakash 51.

1. STAR RACER, 2. HARD TO TOSS, 3. SILVER LINING

5 ANMOL RATAN PLATE (DIV. I) (1,600m), 5-y-o and upward, rated 40 to 65 (Cat. II), 3.15: 1. Hugh Capet (9) Vivek G 61, 2. N R I Sport (6) A. Imran Khan 60, 3. Sun Dancer (1) Mukesh Kumar 59.5, 4. Barbet (4) Deepak Singh 57.5, 5. The Akhanda (5) Ashad Asbar 57.5, 6. Path Of Peace (10) P. Ajeeth Kumar 55, 7. Star Medal (2) R.S. Jodha 54.5, 8. Fly Tothe Stars (7) S. Zervan 54, 9. Honourable Lady (3) P. Sai Kumar 52 and 10. Aerial Combat (8) Surya Prakash 51.5.

1. BARBET, 2. FLY TOTHE STARS, 3. HUGH CAPET

6 BALLERINA STAR PLATE (DIV. II) (1,200m), 5-y-o and upward, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 3.45: 1. Power Ranger (2) R.S. Jodha 61.5, 2. Precious Gift (4) Ajay Kumar 60.5, 3. Coming Home (13) Vivek G 60, 4. Saint Emilion (3) Shivansh 60, 5. D Minchu (11) Nikhil Naidu 59, 6. Ok Boss (10) Deepak Singh 58, 7. Star Cruise (6) Kiran Naidu 56.5, 8. Beauty Flame (8) Mohit Singh 56, 9. Challenger (7) Nakhat Singh 56, 10. Sucker Punch (12) G. Naresh 54.5, 11. Chica Bonita (5) A.A. Vikrant 54, 12. Golden Inzio (1) Kuldeep Singh (Jr) 52 and 13. Riffa (9) P. Sai Kumar 50.

1. SAINT EMILION, 2. PRECIOUS GIFT, 3. COMING HOME

7 B. VIJAY REDDY MEMORIAL CUP (1,200m), rated 40 to 65 (Cat. II), 4.15: 1. Stunning Force (4) Ajay Kumar 60, 2. See My Spark (8) Mukesh Kumar 59, 3. Red Snaper (1) Nikhil Naidu 58.5, 4. Juramento (2) Kaviraj 56, 5. Garnet (6) Kuldeep Singh (Sr) 55, 6. Wind Sprite (7) Afroz Khan 52.5, 7. Dyanoosh (3) Kuldeep Singh (Jr) 52 and 8. Clefairy (5) Santosh Raj 50.5.

1. STUNNING FORCE, 2. WIND SPRITE, 3. RED SNAPER

8 BUSINESS TYCOON PLATE (1,400m), rated up to 25 (Cat. III), 4.45: 1. Cash Register (10) Nikhil Naidu 60, 2. Federer (2) P. Ajeeth Kumar 60, 3. Galore (4) R.S. Jodha 60, 4. London Bell (8) Nakhat Singh 60, 5. Special Effort (1) N.B. Kuldeep 59.5, 6. Tortilla Chip (9) P. Sai Kumar 59, 7. Good Tidings (3) Mukesh Kumar 58, 8. Jet Falcon (6) G. Naresh 56.5, 9. Duck Hawk (5) Md. Ismail 56 and 10. My Way Or Highway (7) Mohit Singh 55.

1. SPECIAL EFFORT, 2. JET FALCON, 3. GOOD TIDINGS

Day's Best: **STUNNING FORCE**

Jackpot: 4, 5, 6, 7 & 8.

Mini Jackpot: (i) 2, 3, 4, & 5. (ii) 5, 6, 7 & 8.

Treble: (i) 1, 2 & 3, (ii) 3, 4 & 5, (iii) 6, 7 & 8.

Tanala: All races.

Exceed obliges in the C.M. Varma and B.M. Varma Memorial Million

BENGALURU: S. Attaollahi-trained Exceed (Trevor up) won the C.M. Varma and B.M. Varma Memorial Million, the feature event of the races held here on Friday (Jan 12). The winner is owned by Mr. Marthand Singh Mahindra, Mrs. Rina Mahindra, Mr. Sp. Thirunavukkarasu & Mr. Joydeep Datta Gupta.

THE RESULTS:

1. ALAKNANDA PLATE (DIV. II): MARCO POLO (G. Vivek) 1, Raffles (Ram Nandan) 2, Bellissimo (Afsar Khan) 3 and Sacred Creator (Angad) 4. Not run: Princess Jasmine. 1-1/2, 4-1/4 and 3-1/4. 1m, 28.00s. ₹25 (w), 13, 10 and 60 (p), SHP: 34, THP: 145, FP: 65, Q: 42, Trinella: 1,726, Exacta: 5,955. Favourite: Marco Polo. Owner: Mr. Srinivasa M. Trainer: Azhar Ali.

2. ALAKNANDA PLATE (DIV. I): WAY OF LIFE (R. Pradeep) 1, Lady Godiva (Darshan) 2, Emeraldo (Mark) 3 and She's A Lady (Antony) 4. Nk, Shd and Shd. 1m, 28.74s. ₹218 (w), 35, 13 and 16 (p), SHP: 48, THP: 48, FP: 5,381, Q: 447, Trinella: 14,943, Exacta: 16,642. Favourite: She's A Lady. Owners: Mr. Nanda Kumar N & Mr. G. Gangadhar. Trainer: Rajendra Singh.

3. ABBEY FALLS PLATE (DIV. III): SOUTHERNARISTOCRAT (G. Vivek) 1, Embosom (P. Siddaraju) 2, Domina (Srinath) 3 and Mega Success (Jagadeesh) 4. 3-1/4, Hd and Nose. 1m, 14.35s. ₹157 (w), 26, 18 and 12 (p), SHP: 38, THP: 50, FP: 1,534, Q: 555, Trinella: 2,402, Exacta: 13,926. Favourite: Domina. Owner: Mr. Srinivasa M. Trainer: Azhar Ali.

4. JANUARY STAKES: ALDILA (S. John) 1, Vyasa (I. Chisty) 2, Isabelle (L.A. Rozario) 3 and Mystikos (Antony) 4. 1-1/4, 2-1/4 and 1. 1m, 26.53s. ₹52 (w), 20, 15 and 20 (p), SHP: 40, THP: 48, FP: 218, Q: 156, Trinella: 1,088, Exacta: 3,744. Favourite: Glow In The Dark. Owners: Villoo Poonawalla Racing & Breeding Pvt Ltd rep. by Dr. Cyrus S. Poonawalla & Mr. Adar C. Poonawalla. Trainer: Arjun Mangalorkar.

5. ABBEY FALLS PLATE (DIV. II): ALTAMONTE (Jagadeesh) 1, Remontoir (Ram Nandan) 2, Singhsaab (G. Vivek) 3 and Eco Friendly (Tousif) 4. 1-3/4, 1/2 and 3/4. 1m, 14.29s. ₹104 (w), 24, 13 and 16 (p), SHP: 34, THP: 55, FP: 350, Q: 154, Trinella: 2,125, Exacta: 9,219. Favourite: Remontoir. Owner and trainer: Mr. S. Inayathulla.

6. S.M. RAMAKRISHNA RAO MEMORIAL CUP: PROMISE KEPT (S. John) 1, Aherne (Darshan) 2, Devils Magic (Antony) 3 and Armory (Angad) 4. 3/4, Lnk and Snk. 1m, 26.39s. ₹30 (w), 20, 55 and 30 (p), SHP: 177, THP: 67, FP: 542, Q: 349, Trinella: 46,913, Exacta: 45,260 (c/o). Favourite: Promise Kept. Owners: Mr. Rajan Aggarwal & Mr. Gautam Aggarwal. Trainer: Arjun Mangalorkar.

7. C.M. VARMA AND B.M. VARMA MEMORIAL MILLION: EXCEED (Trevor) 1, Art Of Romance (Srinath) 2, Makoto (Antony) 3 and Golden Light (I. Chisty) 4. 6, 1 and 1-1/2. 1m, 13.01s. ₹14 (w), 11, 14 and 12 (p), SHP: 24, THP: 36, FP: 34, Q: 33, Trinella: 52, Exacta: 245. Favourite: Exceed. Owners: Mr. Marthand Singh Mahindra, Mrs. Rina Mahindra, Mr. Sp. Thirunavukkarasu & Mr. Joydeep Datta Gupta. Trainer: S. Attaollahi.

8. ABBEY FALLS PLATE (DIV. I): ULTIMATE STRIKER (Darshan) 1, Silver Swift (G. Vivek) 2, Jokshan (M. Naveen) 3 and War Trail (Ikram Ahmed) 4. Not run: Belvedere. 1-1/4, 1/2 and 1-3/4. 1m, 14.55s. ₹54 (w), 17, 25 and 15 (p), SHP: 66, THP: 56, FP: 515, Q: 213, Trinella: 2,780, Exacta: 46,912. Favourite: Jokshan. Owners: Mr. H.K. Lakshman Gowda, Mr. Sharath M. Narayana, Mr. N. Prem Kumar & Mr. Shailendra Singh. Trainer: V. Lokanath.

Jackpot: ₹7,596 (33 tkts.); Runner-up: 1,064 (101 tkts.); Treble (i): 9,109 (carried over); (ii): 277 (58 tkts.).

Satwik and Chirag in semifinals

Press Trust of India
KUALA LUMPUR

Star Indian shuttlers Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty reached their second successive semifinal after humbling China's Ren Xiang Yu and He Ji Ting in straight games at the Malaysia Open Super 1000 tournament here on Friday.

The World No. 2 pair looked in control during the rallies and were also proactive at the net to post a dominating 21-11, 21-8 win over World No. 32 Yu and Ting in just 35 minutes.

Ashwini Ponnappa and Tanisha Crasto, however, suffered a 15-21, 13-21 loss to Japan's Rin Iwanaga and Kie Nakanishi in the women's doubles quarterfinals.

MAKES THE GRADE

Sumit Nagal outclasses Molcan to enter Australian Open main draw

FILE PHOTO: SANDEEP SAXENA

Sumit Nagal on Friday entered the singles main draw of the Australian Open with an easy win over Slovakia's Alex Molcan in the tournament's qualifying final in Melbourne. Nagal cruised past Molcan 6-4, 6-4. Nagal will now face Kazakhstan's World No. 31 Alexander Bublik in the first round.

GOOD DAY

India-A dominate proceedings against England Lions

FILE PHOTO: K. MURALI KUMAR

Opener Rajat Patidar, in pic, scored an unbeaten fifty as India-A reached 123 for one after dismissing England Lions for 233 on the first day of their two-day practice match in Ahmedabad on Friday. **The scores:** England Lions 233 in 51.1 overs (Manav Suthar 3/45) vs India-A 123/1 in 26 overs (Rajat Patidar 61 batting). **Toss:** Lions.

BELIEF

India can get into the second round, says Bhutia

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Indian football legend Bhaichung Bhutia said that India should go with a positive mindset against Australia in its AFC Asian Cup opener on Saturday. "It's possible to get into the second round," Bhutia said at a Masterclass session by Orchids The International School in Bengaluru. "Australia is a tough team but not unbeatable."

SMOOTH START

Panthers beat Titan to begin home leg in style

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Jaipur Pink Panthers began its home leg in style with a tight 38-35 win against Telugu Titans in the Pro Kabaddi League match in Jaipur on Friday. Arjun Deshwal grabbed his fourth Super 10 in as many games as he finished with 14 raid points.In another match Puneri Paltan downed Gujarat Giants 37-17.

Host India will have its task cut out in clinching the Paris ticket

The advantage for Savita & Co. will be familiarity with the turf after winning the ACT, and the massive crowd support

HOCKEY

Uthra Ganesan
RANCHI

The comprehensive triumph at the Asian Champions Trophy already in the past, the Indian women's hockey team will be hoping to build on its success and get the coveted ticket to Paris Olympics when it starts its campaign in the Olympic Qualifiers against USA here on Saturday.

It will be a repeat of India's route to the Olympics last time around although the format is different this time. India outplayed USA, with coach Janneke Schopman then in the rival dugout, in a two-game thriller in 2019 by a solitary goal to qualify for the Tokyo Olympics. While only four from that USA team have travelled this time, India too has had an overhaul with several seniors missing.

Schopman is aware of the challenge. "Every team is here only to qualify and we know rankings don't matter any more. We need to be ready against every team. Knowing the USA's mentality, we know they will fight hard and compete... they have speed and strength and some skilful players too. We need to defend well and score off the chances we get to get full points," she admitted.

Preparation time: India, as the second-highest-ranked side in the competition, will be vying to have a good showing. PTI

On paper, the host should have it easy - it is the second highest-ranked side in the competition with only former Olympic and world champion Germany ahead, and a favourite to win, and three spots up for grabs.

But as the Asian Games proved, rankings matter little under pressure. The format of the competition means there will be little time to slip and recover as India will have to finish among the top two in its four-team pool and then reach the final.

With New Zealand and Italy as the other teams with India in Pool B, the host must make its chances count. While New Zealand is known for its physical play and has a massively lopsided head-to-head record in its favour, Italy won't be a pushover either, especially with India relying on youngsters to get its job done.

The team suffered a blow when veteran Vandana Katariya was ruled out with a freak injury just before the competition. With Deep Grace Ekka excluded, the team is light in experience and a lot will depend on the scoring prowess of the local trio of Sangita Kumari and Salima Tete, joined by a returning Beauty Dung Dung.

Nikki Pradhan will have to shoulder the burden of defence along with captain Savita, and the absence of Ekka means the inexperienced Deepika will be the sole penalty corner executioner for the side, an area of concern since the past few tournaments.

The advantage for India will be familiarity with the turf after winning the ACT and the massive crowd support. Janneke had expressed reservations before the ACT given the team had rarely played in front of a full house before but the team's performance back then should ease her worries.

The groupings:

Pool A: Germany (5), Japan (11), Chile (14), Czech Republic (25).
Pool B: India (6), New Zealand (9), United States (15), Italy (19).

Axar ready to attack more, trade runs for wickets

Focused: Axar, who shone with the ball in the first T20I, says process is important. R.V. MOORTHY

AFGHANISTAN IN IND

Rakesh Rao
MOHALI

Axar Patel is first among equals when it comes to finding a replacement for an unavailable Ravindra Jadeja in white-ball cricket.

This left-handed all-rounder started off on the right foot in the three-match T20 opener here against Afghanistan, bowling four tight overs for two wickets.

In chilly conditions far from conducive for spinners, Axar was on target and proved instrumental in Afghanistan slipping from an assured 50 for no loss to 57 for three at the half-way stage.

"There was no help from the pitch, the weather was also very harsh. My aim was to stick to my strength and wait for the batters to go after me. I bowled a tight line and got the wickets as the batters took a chance,"said Axar in the post-match press conference reflecting on his bowling performance that cut short the innings of Afghanistan opener Rahmanullah Gurbaz and the experienced Rahmat Shah.

Returning to action after a quadriceps strain suffered in Asia Cup, Axar spoke about his fresh approach. "I am not thinking about the economy anymore. My mindset is to attack more. I focus more on taking wickets than bowling economically."

The injury-induced layoff also helped him work on his skill-sets. "My mindset during the rehab was to ensure how I could improve my game. At the NCA, I worked a lot on my bowling. I have worked consciously to add 5 to 10% to my bowling."

When asked about how he looked at the prospects of selection to the team for the World Cup in June, Axar sounded pragmatic. "There is competition, but it depends on how you take it. It is important to focus on the process. You can't think about the T20 World Cup from now since there are five Tests against England, followed by the IPL. So, there's some time left for the T20 World Cup."

Largest Indian contingent for WTT Star Contender Goa

Sports Bureau
CHENNAI

A. Sharath Kamal and G. Sathiyan, alongside 35 other Indian paddlers, are set to compete in the singles qualifiers as the WTT Star Contender Goa 2024 gears up to achieve the highest-ever Indian participation in a World Table Tennis (WTT) event.

The second edition of India's biggest international table tennis tournament, co-hosted by Stupa Sports Analytics and Ultimate Table Tennis under the guidance of Table Tennis Federation of India, will be played at the Peddem Indoor Stadium in Mapusa from January 23 to 28.

Nine Indians, including the highest world-ranked Indian paddler Manika Batra at 35, and Harmeet Desai, have secured direct entry into the main draw. The inclusion of 32 new names in the qualifying list brings India's total participation to 41 across categories.

The 2023 World Championships doubles bronze medallist Cho Dae-seong, 17-year-old Oh Junsung from Korea and Hungarian paddler Bence Majoros are among the international stars.

Akhil Sheoran wins rifle 3-position gold

ASIAN SHOOTING

Sports Bureau
NEW DELHI

Akhil Sheoran won the gold, beating compatriot Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar by 1.2 points in the men's rifle 3-position event in the Asian shooting championship in Jakarta, Indonesia, on Friday.

Akhil and Swapnil Kusale had already won the Olympic quota in the event, and thus the focus was on good performance and enhancing the country's medal haul. Swapnil also made the final and placed sixth eventually.

The Olympic quota places were bagged by bronze medallist Thongphaphum Vongsukdee of Thailand and Konstantin Malinovskiy of Kazakhstan who were placed fifth behind qualification topper Yu Hao (589) of China.

India will be eyeing the last of the Olympic quotas in men's 25-metre rapid-fire pistol event on Saturday.

Adarsh Singh and Vijayveer Sidhu kept themselves in the race with identical scores of 288, at the halfway stage, in rapid fire pistol. They will be fighting for the Olympic quota with shooters from Kazakhstan, Japan, Vietnam, Indonesia.

Akhil Sheoran.
SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

China and Korea have already won their two Olympic quota places in the event, while India won the first quota through Anish Bhanwala.

India was proud on top of the medals table with 11 gold, eight silver and seven bronze. China followed with five gold, five silver and four bronze.

The results: 50m rifle 3-position: Men: 1. Akhil Sheoran 460.2 (586); 2. Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar 459.0 (588); 3. Thongphaphum Vongsukdee (Tha) 448.8 (583); 6. Swapnil Kusale 414.2 (584). **RPO:** Niraj Kumar 588; Chain Singh 588. **Team:** 1. India 1758, 2. China 1744, 3. Korea 1735.

India ready for the Australian challenge

AFC ASIAN CUP

Neeladri Bhattacharjee
DOHA

India's campaign at the AFC Asian Cup will start in a David versus Goliath battle, against the 2015 champion Australia, at the Ahmad bin Ali Stadium on Saturday.

The Blue Tigers, who have qualified for consecutive editions of the event for the first time, also have Syria and Uzbekistan in Group B.

But their first and biggest challenge would be to don the robes of a giant-killer against an opponent they last beat 67 years ago, at the Summer Olympics, under legendary coach Syed Abdul Rahim.

"It is going to be very difficult. We know their achievements, with their top players coming from top European leagues who play competitive football week in and week out. It is not going to be easy but we are here to embrace the challenge," Igor Stimac, India's head coach, said about Australia on Friday.

Bring them on! Coach Stimac says the Blue Tigers will give it their all against the Socceroos. AIFF MEDIA

Injury concerns

India regulars Anwar Ali, Ashique Kuruniyan, Jeakson Singh are unavailable due to injury, while Sahal Abdul Samad is ruled out of the first game.

Australia, on the other hand, comes into the tournament as one of the favourites to lift the title.

Not so long ago its coach, Graham Arnold, guided Australia to the round of 16 of the FIFA World Cup in the same country, a feat it had last achieved in 2006.

On Friday, Arnold said they will look to use the familiarity of conditions to its advantage but will remain cautious of complacency.

"We know what India can do. They've got some technically good players. But we are focused on ourselves well and we'll try and get (good) results out of this match," Arnold said.

The biggest miss for the Socceroos would be forward Mathew Leckie, who is out with a torn hamstring which opened the door for the return of Bruno Fornaroli.

"The message to the players and the staff is that we've come here for a reason, and that is to win the Asian Cup," Arnold added.

In the other Group B match, Uzbekistan will lock horns with Syria.

India's schedule (in IST): **Jan. 13:** vs. Australia, 5 p.m.; **Jan. 18:** vs. Uzbekistan, 8 p.m.; **Jan. 23:** vs. Syria, 5 p.m.

Jurel in India squad for England Tests

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The selectors on Friday stuck to the tried and tested names while announcing the India team for the first two Tests of the five-match series against England, with wicketkeeper-batter Dhruv Jurel being the lone new face.

Rohit Sharma will lead the 16-man side while Jasprit Bumrah will be his deputy.

Senior pacer Mohammed Shami was not named in the squad as he is continuing his recovery process from an injury that he suffered during the ODI World Cup last year.

Dhruv Jurel. FILE PHOTO: AFP

The squad (first two Tests): Rohit Sharma (Capt.), Shubman Gill, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Virat Kohli, Shreyas Iyer, K.L. Rahul (wk), K.S. Bharat (wk), Dhruv Jurel (wk), R. Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel, Kuldeep Yadav, Mohd. Siraj, Mukesh Kumar, Jasprit Bumrah (Vice-capt.) and Avesh Khan.

The schedule: Jan. 25 to 29 (Hyderabad), Feb. 2 to 6 (Visakhapatnam), Feb. 15 to 19 (Rajkot), Feb. 23 to 27 (Ranchi), March 7 to 11 (Dharamsala).

Southee hits milestone as NZ downs Pakistan

Agence France-Presse
AUCKLAND

Tim Southee became the first player to 150 wickets in T20Is, leading New Zealand to a 46-run win over Pakistan in their series opener in Auckland. The veteran seam bowler claimed four wickets (four for 25) to pass the milestone and helped dismiss the tourist for 180 in reply to NZ's imposing 226 for eight, handing it first blood in the five-match series.

The scores: New Zealand 226/8 in 20 overs (Williamson 57, Daryl 61, Shaheen 3/46, 3/34) bt Pakistan 180 in 18 overs (Babar 57, Southee 4/25). **PoM:** Mitchell.

Koushik picks up four as Gujarat gets bowled out for 264

Kshitij and Umang rescue the host with a 157-run fifth-wicket stand after coming together at 45 for four; Prasidh leaves the field due to an injury

RANJI TROPHY

Ashwin Achal
AHMEDABAD

Good job: Karnataka will be pleased that it could dismiss Gujarat on the first day itself. VIJAY SONEJI

Pacer V. Koushik (four for 49) continued his dream run in First Class cricket, helping Karnataka dismiss Gujarat for 264 on the opening day of their Ranji Trophy match at the Narendra Modi Stadium here on Friday.

Koushik, who entered this fixture with an incredible average of 14.75 in 10 matches, put on yet another exhibition of skilled seam bowling. He choked the run flow with a tight line, bringing the ball back in sharply. The 31-year-old was most dangerous when he slipped the odd one straight through.

Het Patel and Sunpreet Bagga were his early victims – the top-order batters paying the price for being stuck on the crease. As close of play approached, Koushik took out two tailenders to end the Gujarat essay.

The host enjoyed a fine afternoon session, when Kshitij Patel (95, 161b, 11x4) and Umang Kumar (72, 143b, 12x4) kept the bowlers at bay. The duo displayed great tenacity in a 157-run fifth-wicket stand to rescue the home side from 45 for four.

Kshitij fell just short of a maiden First Class century when he glanced an attempted hook off fast bowler V. Vyshak to the wicketkeeper.

Left-arm spinner Rohit Kumar then joined the party, dismissing Umang and Ripal Patel in quick succession. Rohit was ineffective when he bowled a defensive line outside leg stump, but when he switched to around the wicket and tossed it outside off, rewards were instant.

Umang and Ripal could not resist the big heave, and ended up spooning simple catches to point. Gujarat captain Chintan Gaja (45 n.o., 92b, 1x4, 3x6) was up for a fight, but lacked support from his mates.

Fast bowler Prasidh Krishna, who entered this outing fresh from international Test duty, left the field with a likely quadriceps injury. Prasidh was unable to complete his 15th over. It was a memorable debut for wicketkeeper Sujay Sateri, who was included in the eleven due to an injury to regular custodian Sharath Srinivas. Sateri, 24, was safe as a house, taking three brilliant diving catches.

The scores:

Gujarat — 1st innings: Priyank Panchal b Vyshak 24, Het Patel c Padikkal b Koushik 4, Sunpreet Bagga lbw b Koushik 0, Manan Hingrajia c Sateri b Prasidh 4, Kshitij Patel c Sateri b Vyshak 95, Umang Kumar c Padikkal b Rohit 72, Ripal Patel c Prasidh b Rohit 0, Chintan Gaja (not out) 45, S.A. Desai c Padikkal b Prasidh 4, R.A. Vaghela c Sateri b Koushik 0, Arzan Nagwaswalla c Nikin b Koushik 6.

Extras (b-4, lb-2, w-1, nb-3): 10; Total (in 88 overs): 264.

Fall of wickets: 1-5, 2-17, 3-27, 4-45, 5-202, 6-208, 7-213, 8-222, 9-240.

Karnataka bowling: Prasidh 14.5-4-62-2, Koushik 20-6-49-4, Vyshak 18.1-3-42-2, Rohit 26-4-70-2, Shubhang 9-0-35-0.

RANJI TROPHY SCORES — ROUND 2, DAY 1

ELITE: Group-A: Rajkot: Saurashtra 145 in 55 overs (Cheteshwar Pujara 49, Jayant Yadav 5/42) vs. Haryana 122/1 in 33 overs (Ankit Kumar 68 batting).

Pune: Jharkhand 292/5 in 89 overs (Kumar Suraj 83, Virat Singh 108) vs. Maharashtra.

Delhi: Services 173/1 in 73 overs (Nitin Tanwar 61 batting, Ravi Chauhan 81 batting) vs. Rajasthan.

Ahmedabad: Manipur 75 in 34.3 overs (Aditya Thakare 5/32, Aditya Sarwate 4/6) vs. Vidarbha 123/4 in 49 overs.

Group-B: Mumbai: Mumbai 281/6 in 88 overs (Bhupen Lalwani 61, Suved Parkar 41, Shreyas Iyer 48).

Patna: Bihar 108 in 38.4 overs (Bipin Saurabh 49, Ravi Kiran 5/21) vs. Chhattisgarh 90/1 in 27 overs (Rishabh Tiwari 42 batting).

Kanpur: Uttar Pradesh 60 in 20.5 overs (Mohammed Kaif 4/14) vs. Bengal 95/5 in 28 overs (Bhuvneshwar Kumar 5/25).

Guwahati: Kerala 141/1 in 37 overs (Rohan Kunnummal 83, Krishna Prasad 52 batting) vs. Assam.

Group-C: Mullanpur: Railways 118/3 in 34 overs (Pratham Singh 50 batting) vs. Punjab.

Agartala: Tripura vs. Tamil Nadu. *Play washed out.*

Porvorim: Goa 267/3 in 90 overs (Ishaan Gadekar 45, Suyash Prabhudessai 124 batting, Krishnamurthy Siddharth 77).

Ahmedabad: Gujarat 264 in 88 overs (Kshitij Patel 95, Umang Kumar 72, Chintan Gaja 45 n.o., Vasuki Koushik 4/49) vs. Karnataka.

Group-D: Indore: Odisha 208/6 in 85.3 overs (Subhranshu Senapati 87 batting, Rajesh Dhuper 51) vs. Madhya Pradesh.

Dharamsala: Uttarakhand 229/9 in 76 overs (Aditya Tare 100) vs. Himachal Pradesh.

Vadodara: Baroda 218 in 69.5 overs (Jyotsnil Singh 51, Kinit Patel 44, Sagar Udeshi 7/82) vs. Puducherry 54/3 in 18 overs.

Jammu: Delhi 0 for no loss in 1 over vs. Jammu & Kashmir.

PLATE: Shillong: Meghalaya 111 in 33.1 overs (Kishan Lyngdoh 51 n.o., Palakodeti Sairam 4/33) vs. Hyderabad 182/4 in 47 overs (Rohit Rayudu 54 batting, Chandan Sahani 52).

Anand: Sikkim 307/5 in 91 overs (Pankaj Rawat 58, Nilesh Lamichaney 103, Palzor Tamang 50 batting) vs. Arunachal Pradesh.

Nadiad: Nagaland 211 in 84.1 overs (Sedezhalie Rupero 45, Mohit Jangra 6/52) vs. Mizoram 6/1 in 3 overs.

STATE ROUND-UP

Karan stuns Van Wyk, makes the last four

India's Karan Singh ousted top seed Kris Van Wyk from South Africa 6-3, 6-3 to enter the semifinals of the PET ITF Mandya Open

Other results: Singles (quarterfinals): Orel Kimhi (Isr) bt Madhwin Kamath 7-6(5), 6-0; Jelle Sels (Ned) bt Thijmen Loof (Ned) 6-7(4), 6-1, 6-4.

Doubles (semifinals): Woobin Shin (Kor) & Karan Singh bt Tsung-Hao Huang (Tpe) & Kris Van Wyk (Rsa) 1-6, 6-3, [10-7]; Parikshit Somani & Manish Sureshkumar bt Grigoriy Lomakin (Kaz) & David Pichler (Aut) 6-3, 6-2.

Karnataka posts win

Karnataka beat Jharkhand by 17 runs in the BCCI Senior Women's One Day Trophy in Cuttack.

The scores: Karnataka 265/8 in 50 overs (Roshini Kiran 75, Vrinda Dinesh 25, Niki Prasad 50, Mithila Vinod 57, Devyani 3/43) bt Jharkhand 248 in 49.4 overs (Ritu 82, Khushbu Kumari 40, C. Prathyusha 3/68).

INBRIEF

Super Cup: Goa beats Inter Kashi; Odisha pips Bengaluru

Ahmed Jahouh's goal in the first half helped Odisha FC prevail over a 10-man Bengaluru FC in a group-D match of the Super Cup in Bhubaneswar on Friday. Earlier, FC Goa got the better of Inter Kashi 2-1.

The result: Group-D: Odisha FC 1 (Ahmed Jahouh 21) bt Bengaluru FC 0; FC Goa 2 (Noah Sadaoui 58, Carlos Martinez 66) bt Inter Kashi 1 (Nikum Gyamar 78).

LIVE TELECAST

Ranji Trophy: Jio Cinema App, 9.30 a.m.

AFC Asian Cup: Australia vs India, Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 5 p.m.

Premier League: SS Select 1 (SD & HD) & Hotstar, 6 & 11 p.m.

Ultimate Kho-Kho: Sony Sports Ten 1 (SD & HD) & LIV, 7 & 8.45 p.m.

PKL: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD) & Hotstar, 8 p.m. onwards

Australian Open: Sony Sports Ten 2, 5 (SD & HD) & LIV, 5.30 a.m. onwards (Sunday)

FCBU aims to make the I-League

FOOTBALL

Sports Bureau
BENGALURU

FCBU head coach Varela, left, and club owner Manchanda.

Two-time BDFA Super Division champions FC Bengaluru United (FCBU) will take to the field in I-League 2 with the singular aim of making the grade for the 2024-25 I-League.

I-League 2 will be played with eight teams in a home-and-away double round-robin format with the top two teams earning promotion. FCBU will open its campaign on January 20 against Kenkre FC at the Padukone-Dravid Centre for Sports Excellence.

Head coach Fernando Santiago Varela, for whom the upcoming season will be his second stint at FCBU, expressed confidence that the team was well-rounded and up for the challenge.

"The team has players in every position who can come together and play as a unit," the Spaniard said on Friday. "Some have played under me in other clubs, so that familiarity helps."

Club owner Gaurav Manchanda said that there being a pathway now all the way up to the Indian Super League will motivate players.

"There is clarity which spurs more players to enter the ecosystem," he said. "Our goal is to eventually make it to the ISL, but we are aware that we have to take it step by step."

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